

EMPIRES
OF THE
WORLD



THE MONGOL EMPIRE

A HISTORICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

TIMOTHY MAY, EDITOR

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THE MONGOL EMPIRE

A Historical Encyclopedia

Volume I

Timothy May, Editor

Empires of the World



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CONTENTS

VOLUME I

Preface	xiii
Introduction	xv
Chronology	xxv
Government and Politics	1
<i>Overview Essay</i>	<i>1</i>
Daidu	4
Dual Government	6
Government Structure	8
Guyuk's Election (1246)	10
Immigrant Religions in Mongol China	13
<i>Inju</i>	15
Karakorum	17
Khubilai Becomes Khan (May 5, 1260)	20
Mongol Empire, Dissolution of (1260)	22
Nogai (d. 1299)	24
Northern Yuan (1368–1634)	26
<i>Paiza</i>	29
<i>Quriltai</i>	31
Sarai	33
Shamanism	35
Shangdu	37
Sultaniyya	39
Tabriz	42
Temur Khan (r. 1294–1307)	44
Titles	46
Toghon Temur (r. 1333–1370)	48
Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246)	51
Uzbek Khan (1282–1341; r. 1313–1341)	53

Women in the Court	55
<i>Yasa</i>	58
Organization and Administration	61
<i>Overview Essay</i>	61
Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263)	64
Baiju (d. 1260)	67
Blue Horde	69
Chagatai Khanate	71
Golden Horde	73
Il-Khanate	75
<i>Karachi Begs</i>	77
<i>Keshik</i>	79
Khurasan	81
Mahmud Yalavach (d. ca. 1262)	83
Mawarannahr	85
Moghulistan	87
Muqali (1170–1223)	90
<i>Ordo</i>	92
Qasar	94
<i>Tamgha</i>	96
<i>Tammachi</i>	97
Taxation	99
Transfer of Authority	101
Tribe	103
<i>Ulus</i>	106
Writing Systems	108
<i>Yam</i>	110
Yelu Chucai (1189–1243)	113
Yuan Empire (1265–1368)	115
Yuan Society	117
Individuals	121
<i>Overview Essay</i>	121
Abaqa (r. 1265–1282)	124
Abu Said (r. 1317–1335)	126
Batu (1203–1255)	129
Baybars I (1223–1277)	131
Borte (ca. 1161–1230)	134
Chabi Khatun (d. 1281)	136
Chagatai Khan (d. 1242)	138
Chinggis Khan (1164–1227)	140
Choban (d. 1327)	143
Doquz Khatun (d. 1265)	146

Ghazan (1271–1304, r. 1295–1304)	148
Guyuk (r. 1246–1248)	150
Hoelun (d. ca. 1210)	153
Hulegu (1217–1265)	155
Ibn Battuta (1304–1369)	157
Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah (r. 1221–1230)	159
Jochi (d. 1225)	162
Khubilai Khan (1215–1294)	164
Mongke Khan (1209–1259, r. 1251–1259)	166
Oghul Qaimish Khatun (d. 1251)	169
Ogodei Khan (1186–1241)	171
Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316)	173
Orghina Khatun (d. 1261)	176
Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324)	178
Qaidu (1230–1301)	180
Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252)	183
Timur-i Leng (1336–1405)	186
Tolui Khan (1191–1232)	189
Toqtamysh (d. 1406)	191
Groups and Organizations	193
<i>Overview Essay</i>	193
Alans	197
The Assassins (1090–1256 CE)	199
Forest People	202
Franciscans	204
Italians	206
Jews	209
Jurchen	212
<i>Juyin</i>	214
Kereit	215
Khitan	217
Kipchaks	220
Mamluks	222
Merkit	225
Naiman	227
Nestorian Christians	229
Oirat	231
Onggirad	233
Onggud	235
<i>Ortoq</i>	237
Sakya Buddhists	240
Semuren	242
Sufis	244

Tangut	247
Tatars	249
Uyghurs	251
Uzbeks	254
White Lotus Buddhists	255
Index	259

VOLUME 2

Key Events	1
<i>Overview Essay</i>	1
Alan Goa and the Arrow Parable	4
Baljuna Covenant (1203)	6
Black Death (Mid-14th Century)	8
Chinggis Exchange	11
Chinggis Khan, Death of (1227)	13
Crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249)	16
Europe, Invasion of (1240–1241)	18
Hethum, King of Cilicia (r. 1226–1269), Submission of	20
Japan, Invasion of (1274, 1280)	22
Jin Empire, Fall of the (1234)	25
John of Plano Carpini, Journey of (1180–1252)	27
Kulikovo Pole, Battle of (1380)	29
Mongol Conversion to Islam	32
Otrar Massacre (1218)	35
Peace of Qatwan (1267)	37
<i>Quriltai</i> of 1206	39
Rabban Sawma, Mission of (1286–1288)	41
Red Turban Revolt (1340s–1368)	44
Shiremun's Coup (1250)	46
Tarmashirin, Overthrow of (1334)	48
Tatar Yoke	50
Teb Tenggeri, Death of (1206)	52
Toluid Revolution (1250)	54
William of Rubruck, Journey of (1253–1255)	56
Yesugei, Death of (ca. 1174/1175)	58
Military	61
<i>Overview Essay</i>	61
<i>Alginchi</i>	64
Ankara, Battle of (1402)	67
Armor	68
Ayn Jalut, Battle of (1260)	70

Baghdad, Siege of (1258)	72
Caizhou, Siege of (1233–1234)	75
Cannon	77
Chakirmaut, Battle of (1204)	79
<i>Cherik</i>	81
Chormaqan Noyan (ca. 1200–1240)	83
Decimal Organization	85
Gunpowder	87
Irtys River, Battle of the (1209)	89
Java, Invasion of (1292–1293)	91
Kaifeng, Siege of (1233)	93
Kalka River, Battle of the (1223)	95
Kose Dagh, Battle of (1243)	97
Liegnitz, Battle of (1241)	99
Mohi, Battle of (April 1241)	102
Siege Warfare	105
Subedei (1176–1248)	107
Tactics	110
<i>Tamma</i>	112
Trebuchet	114
Tsunami Strategy	116
Weapons	118
Objects and Artifacts	121
<i>Overview Essay</i>	121
Calendar	124
Clothes	127
Five Snouts	130
Great Wall	132
Horse	135
Kumiss	137
Medicine	140
Money	142
<i>Onggon</i>	144
Pasta	146
<i>The Secret History of the Mongols</i>	148
<i>Shengwu qinzheng lu</i>	150
<i>Tenggeri</i>	152
<i>Yinshan zhengyao</i> (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink) (1330)	155
Yurt	157
Key Places	161
<i>Overview Essay</i>	161

Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258)	164
Antioch, Principality of	167
Delhi Sultanate	174
Jin Empire (1125–1234)	176
Kara Khitai (1125–1218)	179
Khwarazmian Empire (1097–1224)	182
Kipchak Steppes	184
Koryo (935–1392)	187
Lithuania	189
Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)	191
Samarkand	193
Song Empire (960–1279)	195
Sultanate of Rum	197
Trebizond	200
Uyghuristan	202
Xi Xia (1038–1227)	204
Xiangyang, Siege of (1267–1273)	206
Yunnan	208
Zhongdu	210
Primary Documents	215
1. Ibn al-Athir on the Mongol Invasion of the Islamic World (Early 13th Century)	215
2. Ibn al-Athir on Mongol Invasions of the Near East (Early 13th Century)	216
3. Robert of Clari's Description of the Kipchaks (ca. 1205)	218
4. The Chronicler Juzjani's Account of the Capture of Zhongdu (1214)	218
5. Account of the Otrar Massacre (1219)	219
6. Chinggis Khan's Invitation to the Daoist Monk K'iu Ch'ang Ch'un (May 15, 1219)	220
7. Description of the <i>Boqta</i> Headdress of Mongolian Women (ca. 1219)	221
8. Excerpt from Wu-ku-sun Chung Tuan's Account of His Embassy to Chinggis Khan in Central Asia (ca. 1220)	222
9. Chinggis Khan's Oration at the Sack of Bukhara (ca. 1220)	223
10. A Description of Mawarannahr by Yelu Chucai (ca. 1220)	224
11. Jalal al-Din Requests Help against the Mongols (ca. 1230)	225
12. John of Plano Carpini's Description of the Mongols (1240s)	225
13. John of Plano Carpini's Description of Mongol Armor (1240s)	226

14. John of Sarrasin's Letter to Nicholas of Arrode Describing a Mongol Ploy (June 23, 1249)	227
15. Description of Prince Alexander Nevsky from the <i>Nikonian Chronicle</i> (1250s)	228
16. William of Rubruck Enjoys Kumiss (1250s)	228
17. William of Rubruck's Description of Mongke's Drinking Fountain (1250s)	229
18. William of Rubruck's Account of the Distinctive Mongol Hairstyle (1250s)	230
19. William of Rubruck's Description of Yurts (1250s)	231
20. Matthew Paris on the Fear Provoked by the Approach of the Mongols (1250s)	232
21. Ch'ang Te's Description of the Assassins (1250s)	232
22. Letter of Mongke to King Louis IX of France (1250s)	233
23. Description of William of Rubruck's Audience with Mongke Khan (May 31, 1254)	234
24. Bar Hebraeus on the Fall of Baghdad and the Abbasid Caliphate (1258)	235
25. Marco Polo's Account of the Fall of Baghdad (1258)	235
26. Letter of Hulegu to King Louis IX of France (1262)	236
27. Marco Polo's Account of the Siege of Xiangyang (1273)	237
28. Rabban Sawma's Account of the Election of Yahba Allah III as <i>Catholicus</i> of the Eastern Church (1281)	238
29. Marco Polo's Account of Nayan's Rebellion against Khubilai Khan (1287)	239
30. Marco Polo on the Women of Khubilai Khan's Court (ca. 1298)	240
31. Marco Polo's Description of China's Countryside (1298)	241
32. Marco Polo on Khubilai Khan's Palace (1298)	242
33. Marco Polo on Paper Money in China (ca. 1300)	243
34. Marco Polo on Mongol Warriors in the 13th Century (ca. 1300)	245
35. Marco Polo's Description of the City of Daidu (ca. 1300)	247
36. Marco Polo's Description of Khubilai Khan Hunting (ca. 1300)	248
37. Marco Polo's Description of Chinese Ships (ca. 1300)	249
38. Marco Polo's Description of Mongol Shamanism (ca. 1300)	250

39. Marco Polo's Account of Khubilai Khan's Hunting Park at Shangdu (ca. 1300)	251
40. Marco Polo's Account of the Assassins (ca. 1300)	252
41. An Armenian Account of the Mongols' Divine Right to Rule (Early 14th Century)	253
42. Passage from <i>Jami'u't-Tawarikh</i> (Compendium of Chronicles) in Which Chinggis Khan Explains the Best Things in Life (Early 14th Century)	254
43. Letter from Ghazan, Ruler of the Il-Khanate, to Pope Boniface VIII (April 1302)	254
44. Rabban Sawma's Account of the Meeting of Oljeitu and Mar Yahba Allah (1304)	255
45. Marco Polo on Mongol Customs (ca. 1324)	256
46. Gilles Li Muisis's Account of the Black Death at the Siege of Kaffa (1347)	257
47. Account of Samarkand under Timur-i Leng (ca. 1403–1406)	257
48. Account of the Battle of the Ugra River from the <i>Nikonian Chronicle</i> (1480)	258
Appendix: Rulers	259
Glossary	263
Bibliography	269
Editor and Contributors	285
Index	287

PREFACE

The *Mongol Empire: A Historical Encyclopedia* comprises two volumes containing 192 entries divided into eight topical sections, as follows:

- Government and Politics
- Organization and Administration
- Individuals
- Groups and Organizations
- Key Events
- Military
- Objects and Artifacts
- Key Places

Each topical section begins with an overview essay, and each alphabetically listed entry in each section concludes with a bibliography of current and important print and electronic information resources on the topics. The entries also include “See also” cross-references that lead readers to related entries and primary documents. Many entries contain sidebars that offer a more in-depth look and some interesting related topics. The encyclopedia also includes an introduction that puts the history of the Mongol Empire into context for nonspecialist readers, such as high school students, college undergraduates, and interested public library readers who comprise the audience for which the entries were written. Other important features of the encyclopedia include 48 primary document excerpts with brief introductions describing the document and explaining its importance, a glossary, a chronology, an appendix listing Mongol rulers, a general bibliography, and a detailed subject index.

There is an axiom to most encyclopedias: they are not exhaustive. With an empire the size of the Mongol Empire, invariably something must be omitted. Two volumes are simply not enough to include everything that could be included. The hope of the editor is that *The Mongol Empire: A Historical Encyclopedia* will lay a foundation for further investigation.

As the editor, I have tried to include as many of the “usual suspects” that one would have expected were necessary. For instance, it would not be a proper encyclopedia on the Mongol Empire without discussing the first four rulers of that empire. At the same

time, there are also many entries that might be unexpected, such as the large number of queens who often (regrettably) receive little attention in many histories of the Mongol Empire. Fortunately, the tide seems to be turning on that issue. Additionally, one cannot include all of the groups and locations that the Mongols conquered without hopelessly simplifying a terribly complex reality.

Other entries were omitted simply because there is a plethora of information easily accessible on them. An example would be Rashid al-Din and his fabulous work, *Jami'at al-Tawarikh* (Compendium of Chronicles). While his name is not as familiar as Marco Polo, Rashid al-Din has become in the past decade or so much more ubiquitous in the discussion of the Mongols. This is largely due to the efforts of Professor Wheeler M. Thackston, who translated *Jami'at al-Tawarikh* into English, thus making Rashid al-Din's history of the Mongols much more accessible. It would be difficult to find a work on the Mongols published in the past decade that did not rely heavily on Rashid al-Din. As historians of the Mongol Empire often enter the field through regional avenues (the Middle East, China, or Russia), not all have acquired proficiency in five or more languages with different scripts and grammatical constructions, and thus translations outside of one's language proficiency are a boon.

On the other hand, there is very little written (in English) about other topics, such items as the *tamgha* or, for a nonscholarly audience, such topics as Moghulistan or the Sakya Buddhists. Detailed information can be found on individuals, such as Muqali and Mahmud Yalavach, but the best detailed sources are in research libraries and in obscure (but amazing) volumes of scholarship. We know much about the Mongol Empire, but unfortunately most of it is inaccessible to the general public. This is the way of new knowledge, however. Eventually it trickles into the mainstream and becomes part of the common historical record.

Other entries are admittedly the interest of the volume editor or a particular author. Hopefully, the reader will read the entries and come to the same appreciation of the importance of the selection. When finalizing the list of articles, the largest question was what could be excluded rather than what should be included in the discussion of the largest contiguous empire in history, whose impact still affects the world into the 21st century.

INTRODUCTION

The rise of the Mongol Empire was not a meteoric one. A Mongolian state appeared over 800 years ago in 1206, but it slowly manifested in the steppes north of China. Indeed, perhaps it is more surprising that the Mongol Empire existed at all. There was no reason to think that a young Mongol lad named Temujin, the man who would become Chinggis Khan, would come to defeat the various tribes of Mongolia and unite them under a single banner. Indeed, everything about his youth should have made it impossible for Temujin to become Chinggis Khan.

As a child, Temujin lost his father to assassination at an early age. His family was abandoned by his clan and left to survive in poverty. Temujin killed his elder half brother over food, and then a rival tribe enslaved Temujin. His young wife was kidnapped, and she then gave birth to the son of her captor. Temujin's uncles attempted to manipulate him for their own gain, his blood brother Jamuqa became his worst enemy, and then finally his mentor turned against him. However, these experiences, which would have crushed many people, became for Temujin what some call character-building moments.

In a series of wars, Temujin emerged victorious and united the various tribes of the Mongolian steppes under his control. In 1206, his supporters recognized him as Chinggis Khan and ruler of the *Yeke Monggol Ulus* (Great Mongol State). The name of his kingdom is very indicative of a new order on the steppe. Chinggis Khan did not merely form a tribal confederation, as had been done for hundreds of years. Instead, he completely altered the social organization of Mongolia, and thus he is truly the father of Mongolia.

Throughout the wars of unification, Chinggis Khan eliminated the leadership of the tribes he conquered. The nature of pastoral nomadic tribes was very fluid. Because the aristocracy of the tribe was the basis of its identity, destroying the elite allowed Chinggis Khan to assimilate the other members of the tribes into the Mongols. Allies of the Mongols maintained their own structure, but conquered enemies were dispersed among his followers, and all of society was divided into 1,000-person or household units known as *minqans*. This was the basic unit for administering the new state as well as the military. The entire society was structured for war because Chinggis Khan still had unfinished business.

In many regards, the rise of the Mongol Empire is somewhat accidental not only in the success of Chinggis Khan's ascension to power but also in the expansion of the

EURASIA BEFORE THE RISE OF THE MONGOL EMPIRE, 1206



Mongol Empire. Expansion under Chinggis Khan had more to do with stabilizing his new state than attempts to conquer the world. His first objectives were to hunt down nomadic leaders who chose to flee from Mongolia rather than submit to his rule. The pursuit of these individuals led into Xi Xia in northwest China and into Central Asia, where the Uyghurs and other smaller polities voluntarily submitted to him in 1209.

As these encounters brought the Mongols into increased contact with sedentary states, the Mongols began to change their mode of operation. Chinggis Khan's primary intent was to first secure goods for his followers as well as to prevent his newly formed state from unraveling. The acquisition of goods was largely achieved through plundering. He did not seek conquest. While Xi Xia agreed to submit to Chinggis Khan and pay tribute, the Jin Empire did not acquiesce to a regular payment of tribute. Since the Jin resisted the traditions of trade and arrangements of tribute, the Mongols continued to raid and even occupy northern China until the Jin Empire no longer existed.

It is clear that Chinggis Khan sought to reward his followers and also keep his well-organized and disciplined army occupied rather than disintegrating anew in tribal conflict. His primary concern was not conquest but rather maintaining the state he created in Mongolia. Not content to be the leader of a traditional nomadic steppe confederation, Chinggis Khan created a new polity, and he had to eliminate destabilizing factors to secure it. This included not only eliminating those tribal leaders who fled his rule and could represent an opposition to his rule in Mongolia but also neighboring sedentary states that had ties to the steppes. Chinggis Khan, as a former vassal of the Jin Empire, not only wished for complete and total independence from the Jin but also realized that by invading the Jin Empire, the Mongols could prevent their interference in the steppe and break their military might.

In doing so Chinggis Khan conquered much of northern China, but he also became involved in Central Asia after a Mongol-sponsored caravan was massacred in the Khwarazmian Empire in 1219. Although Chinggis Khan attempted to resolve the matter peacefully and diplomatically, it was not to be and led to the Mongol invasion of Central Asia and Iran. A small Mongol army also entered the Middle East and then moved into Russia through the Caucasus Mountains before returning to what is modern-day Kazakhstan. The destruction carried on in these campaigns led both Muslim and Christian writers to view the Mongols as a punishment from God for their sins.

Although Chinggis Khan died in 1227, the empire continued on under his son Ogodei. Although a talented ruler, Ogodei is not given the credit he deserves for establishing the Mongol Empire primarily due to the looming shadow of his father and Ogodei's own alcoholism. Once one of his advisers tried to convince him of the dangers of alcohol by showing him the corrosion in a goblet where wine had sat for days. Ogodei consented to cut in half the number of goblets of alcohol he drank a day. And he did but switched to a much larger goblet.

Ogodei is responsible for two things that led to the rapid expansion of the Mongol Empire. The first is an ideology, which was that Koke Mongke Tenggeri, or the Blue Eternal Heaven, had decreed that the Mongols were destined to rule the world. Not submitting to the Mongols violated the will of heaven. There is every reason to believe that the Mongols sincerely believed this, as they rationalized that if it were not true, then how could they conquer from where the sun rises to where the sun sets? It also trumped every other ideology of the day, whether it was the Chinese mandate of heaven, the supremacy of the pope, or the claims of the caliph in Baghdad. What else could explain Mongol success?

Ogodei was also responsible for the creation of a systematic method of conquest that allowed the Mongols to fully maximize their strengths in mobility and method of war. It allowed them to conquer and hold territory without overextending their forces and tying them down in garrison duty. In truth, Ogodei simply built upon the success of Chinggis Khan and his ways of war. Yet, there is no indication that Chinggis Khan conceived of a standard process of conquest; instead, he accepted what came. He had been careful not to overextend himself, but beginning under Ogodei, the Mongols carried out their wars in a very rational and systematic way.

During Ogodei's reign, the Mongols also finished off the Jin Empire, began to campaign against the Song Empire, conquered much of the Middle East, and then began to push west across the Volga River and eventually into Europe. Ogodei's death in 1241 largely halted Mongol expansion not only militarily but also administratively.

Ogodei's wife, Toregene, ruled as regent until 1246. Much of her focus, however, was to accumulate resources to ensure the ascension of her son Guyuk to the throne over other contenders. To achieve this, she dismantled much of the administration, replacing key personnel with cronies who ensured an increased flow of lucre to her coffers. With the additional funds, she secured support for Guyuk's election in 1246. Guyuk during his brief reign (1246–1248) planned a renewed round of conquest with campaigns into Europe, the Song Empire, and the Middle East. He died from illness, however, in 1248. While his military plans amounted to naught, he did reverse the changes his mother made to the government.

Oghul Qaimish, Guyuk's primary wife, ruled as regent. As an administrator, she demonstrated a remarkable lack of interest in her duties. Nor did she appear terribly concerned about raising either of her own sons to the throne. Her sons, Naqu and Khwaja, both set up their own courts and issued their own decrees, often conflicting with those issued by their mother. For two years, a sense of malaise permeated the Mongol Empire. This situation ended abruptly with the Toluid Revolution in 1250, which moved the khanship from the house of Ogodei to that of Chinggis Khan's youngest son, Tolui.

Although Tolui died in 1230, his wife Sorqoqtani had groomed their eldest son, Mongke, for the role. Assisted by Batu, the ruler of the Golden Horde and the head of the family of Jochi, Chinggis Khan's eldest son, Sorqoqtani and Mongke successfully achieved their goal. Opposition to Mongke soon appeared, but it was squashed ruthlessly. The descendants of Ogodei and Chagatai, Chinggis Khan's second son, found themselves on the losing end of a Jochid and Toluid alliance. Those not purged found themselves on the front lines of the war against the Song.

Mongke was perhaps the greatest of the Mongol rulers in terms of administration. He eliminated much of the corruption that had entered the empire's government in the decade between Ogodei's death in 1240 and his own rise to power. Under Mongke's rule, the Mongol Empire was capable of mobilizing immense forces and possessed an army of at least 1 million men. Rather than trying to maximize their forces, the administrative reforms of Mongke allowed the Mongols to unleash a juggernaut. Rather than raiding and creating a buffer between their frontier and the next state, the Mongols simply decided to eliminate one by one those who defied their authority. In the Middle East, the Ismailis of Iran, also known as the Assassins, were destroyed in 1256, and Baghdad fell before the armies of Mongke's brother Hulegu in 1258. In 1259, Mongol armies entered Syria and quickly took Damascus and Aleppo. By 1260, it appeared that Egypt and the remaining crusader states in the Middle East were next. But then fate took a hand.

In addition to the Middle East, Mongke and his brother Khubilai invaded the Song Empire of southern China. This was a difficult campaign due to the mountainous terrain and the extensive rice paddies that slowed the Mongol cavalry. Nonetheless, the

THE MONGOL WORLD, CA. 1260



Mongols made progress as multiple armies invaded. Their success continued until 1259, when Mongke died.

Ironically, the death of the man who put the Mongol Empire at its most powerful stage would also be the cause of its decline. Unfortunately, Mongke had not declared a successor before embarking on campaign. His regent and youngest brother, Ariq Boke, attempted to set himself up in power in Mongolia. Meanwhile, Khubilai did the same in China. To the west, Hulegu appears to have considered it; however, he suffered from a number of setbacks. Mongol forces in Syria were driven out after being defeated at Ayn Jalut by the Mamluks of Egypt in 1260. Initially, this appeared to be a minor reversal. The Mongols had lost before but always avenged their defeats. Now, this was not to be. The defeat inspired resistance by others in Syria. Additionally, Hulegu had to defend his lands from invasion by his cousin (and Batu's brother) Berke, the ruler of the Golden Horde.

Berke's invasion was principally to gain territory that he felt belonged to his family, the Jochids—that is, the family of Jochi, the eldest son of Chinggis Khan. As a Muslim, Berke also claimed that he was avenging the caliph because he was horrified by Hulegu's execution of the Muslim leader. This is somewhat dubious. Although Berke may have been sincere in his religion, it is doubtful if his followers, who were by and large not Muslims, would have followed him solely for this reason.

The territorial issue, on the other hand, is important because it ties into the dynamics that led to the fracturing of the Mongol Empire into four parts. Jochi,

the father of Berke, was Chinggis Khan's son but with questionable legitimacy. Jochi's mother, Borte, had been kidnapped before his birth and was only rescued by Chinggis Khan several months later. Although Jochi's lineage did not matter to Chinggis Khan, it was a source of tension between Chinggis Khan's sons. The Mongols also divided their territory among their sons, with the youngest keeping the ancestral pastures. It also kept them separated. Jochi was promised territory as far west as the Mongol horses' hooves trod, which included the Middle East. This territory had never been officially given to the Jochids, although they maintained representatives in the region.

Thus, the Il-Khanate, as Hulegu's territory became known, and the Golden Horde became embroiled in almost continuous war for a century. In addition, a civil war between Ariq Boke and Khubilai was fought until 1264. This war allowed the other Mongol princes to assert their independence. Even after Khubilai Khan won the war, he was never able to reassert his authority beyond token recognition throughout the empire. Several princes never recognized his authority and continued to resist, particularly in Central Asia.

From a single Mongol Empire emerged four new khanates. Under Khubilai, the Yuan Empire, also known as the Khanate of the Great Khanate, held sway. The Chagatai Khanate ruled Central Asia. The descendants of Jochi ruled the Kipchak steppe and became known as the Golden Horde. In the Middle East, the Il-Khanate created by Hulegu dominated the region from the Euphrates to the Oxus River. By the 14th century, each of these states acted in its own interests. While each khanate forged its own path, a myriad of reasons brought them to their end. If there is one maxim in history, it is that no empire is eternal.

The Khanate of the Great Khan, which dominated East Asia, fell in 1368 to the Ming dynasty. Yet the Yuan established China as a sea power, built the Great Canal that connected northern and southern China, and also reunited China for the first time in 300 years. Furthermore, the Yuan Empire facilitated the spread of a wide variety of Chinese influences westward while bringing Western influences to China.

The Il-Khanate was the shortest lived and fell, curiously, in a rare moment of stability in 1335 simply because of the lack of male heirs. The Il-Khanate's impact was enormous. Because of the Mongols, a Turkic tribe fled into Anatolia, or modern-day Turkey, to avoid their wrath. These Turks took advantage of the power vacuum and established the Ottoman Empire, which lasted until the end of World War I. In addition, the Mongols also patronized a wide number of religious sects, including the Safavi Sufi sect, which eventually established the Safavid Empire in Azerbaijan and Iran. It is because of this that Iran is today overwhelmingly Shia Muslim. Curiously enough, their empire more or less mirrored the borders of the Il-Khanate.

The Golden Horde slowly disintegrated for a variety of reasons in the late 1400s. While it disappeared from the map, the Golden Horde did give rise to a number of Central Asian nations, including the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Crimean and Kazan Tatars, and even a powerful successor state in Moscow, which led to the rise of the Russian Empire.

TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO AND IBN BATTUTA





In Central Asia, the Chagatai Khanate gradually fragmented into oblivion but allowed a Turkic ruler named Timur (Tamerlane) to emerge. Timur, who greatly contributed to the demise of the Golden Horde and defeated both the Ottomans and the Mamluks, lacked one crucial element—being a descendant of Chinggis Khan. Thus, he always kept a Chinggisid puppet on the throne to legitimize his rule. As a result, it was difficult for Timur to assert control over the Golden Horde. Nonetheless, he did establish his own dynasty, which also shaped history as a successor to the Mongols.

One may wonder exactly what the world would be like today if the Mongol Empire had remained intact. It is impossible to say, but the end of the Mongol Empire greatly influenced other events. For instance, trade prospered greatly under the Mongols, and the costs involved were greatly reduced because of the security provided. As the Mongol Empire and its four successors disappeared, so did the favorable conditions. Europe felt the greatest impact. Because of the decline of the Mongols, new trade routes were needed as the old Silk Road became less safe; this need led to Christopher Columbus's journey westward in 1492. And that is but one effect of the Mongol Empire.

TIMUR'S EMPIRE, CA. 1405



CHRONOLOGY

- 1125 Jurchen defeat the Liao dynasty. The Jin Empire is created.
- 1130 Kara Khitai is established by Yelu Dashi.
- 1141 Yelu Dashi defeats Seljuk sultan Sanjar in the Battle of Qatwan. Kara Khitai becomes the dominate power in Central Asia.
- 1162 or 1167 Possible birth dates of Chinggis Khan.
- 1174–1175 Death of Yesugei.
- 1198 Juyin Rebellion against the Jin Empire.
- 1200 Muhammad II becomes the Khwarazmshah.
- 1202 The Tatars are decisively defeated by the Mongols.
- 1203 Baljuna Covenant. The Kereit are defeated.
- 1204 Battle of Chakirmaut. The Naiman are defeated.
- 1205 Death of Jamuqa. Mongols begin to invade Xi Xia.
- 1206 *Quriltai* of 1206. Formation of the *Yeke Monggol Ulus* (Mongol Empire).
- 1207 The Forest People submit.
- 1209 Death of Teb Tenggeri. Battle of the Irtysh River. The Uyghurs submit to Chinggis Khan. Xi Xia submits to the Mongols.
- 1210 The Mongols end tributary status with the Jin Empire.
- 1211 The first Mongol invasion of the Jin Empire occurs.
- 1215 Zhongdu falls.
- 1217 Muqali is placed in charge of the campaign against the Jin Empire.
- 1217–1218 Forest People rebellion.
- 1218 Otrar Massacre. Jebe takes control of Kara Khitai.
- 1219 The invasion of the Khwarazmian Empire begins.
- 1220 Otrar, Bukhara, and Samarkand fall to the Mongols. Mongols control Mawarannahr.
- 1221 Tolui begins an invasion of Khurasan.
- 1223 Death of Muqali. Chinggis Khan departs the Khwarazmian Empire. The Battle of the Kalka River takes place.
- 1227 Destruction of Xi Xia. Chinggis Khan dies.
- 1229 Ogodei becomes the ruler of the Mongol Empire.
- 1230 Chormaqan invades Iran.

- 1233 Siege of Kaifeng. The Siege of Caizhou begins.
- 1234 Fall of the Jin Empire.
- 1235 Karakorum is built.
- 1236 The campaign against the Kipchaks begins.
- 1238 The Mongols begin an invasion of Rus’.
- 1240 Death of Chormaqan. Baiju becomes the *tammachi* in the Middle East.
- 1241 Battle of Liegnitz and Mohi.
- 1243 Battle of Kose Dagh. The Seljuks of Rum submit to the Mongols.
- 1245 John of Plano Carpini begins his journey to Mongolia.
- 1246 Guyuk becomes khan of the Mongol Empire.
- 1247 John of Plano Carpini returns to Europe.
- 1250 The Mamluks seize power in Egypt.
- 1251 Mongke becomes khan. Shiremun’s Coup takes place. The Toluid Revolution occurs.
- 1253 Batu dies. King Hethum of Cilicia submits to Mongke. William of Rubruck begins his journey.
- 1255 William of Rubruck returns to Europe.
- 1256 Hulegu destroys the Assassins. Berke becomes khan of the Golden Horde.
- 1258 Hulegu sacks Baghdad and ends the Abbasid Caliphate.
- 1259 Mongke dies.
- 1260 Battle of Ayn Jalut. Ariq Boke and Khubilai are both elected khan at separate *quriltais*. Dissolution of the Mongol Empire begins.
- 1261 Phagspa Lama become state preceptor in the Yuan Empire.
- 1262 The Golden Horde invades Il-Khanate.
- 1264 Ariq Boke surrenders to Khubilai.
- 1266 Khubilai orders Daidu to be built. The Mamluks invade Cilicia.
- 1267 Daidu’s construction begins. The Peace of Qatwan is agreed upon. The Siege of Xiangyang begins.
- 1271 Marco Polo departs for the court of Khubilai Khan. Khubilai Khan officially declares the Yuan dynasty.
- 1273 The Siege of Xiangyang ends.
- 1274 The first invasion of Japan occurs.
- 1275 The Polo family arrives in China.
- 1276 The court of the Song Empire surrenders to General Bayan.
- 1279 The last Song strongholds are captured, and the Song Empire falls.
- 1281 The second invasion of Japan occurs.
- 1286 Rabban Sawma begins a journey to Europe.
- 1287 Nayan’s Rebellion. Paper money becomes standard in China under the Mongols.
- 1288 Rabban Sawma returns to the Il-Khanate.
- 1292–1293 Invasion of Java.
- 1294 Khubilai Khan dies. Geikhatu attempts to introduce paper money in the Il-Khanate, but the effort fails.

- 1295 Ghazan becomes il-khan. Islam becomes the state religion of the Il-Khanate.
- 1299 Toqtoa, the Golden Horde khan, defeats the kingmaker Nogai.
- 1299–1300 Ghazan conquers Syria and later abandons it.
- 1301 Qaidu dies.
- 1305–1306 Rashid al-Din completes *Jami'at al-Tawarikh* (Compendium of Chronicles).
- 1313 Uzbek becomes khan of the Golden Horde; Islam will become the state religion.
- 1323 Yisun Temur's coup d'état takes place.
- 1331 Tarmashirin becomes khan of the Chagatai Khanate.
- 1334 Tarmashirin is overthrown in the Chagatai Khanate.
- 1335 Abu Said dies, ending the Il-Khanate for lack of heirs.
- 1338–1339 The Black Plague appears in the Chagatai Khanate.
- 1344 The Huanghe River changes course, killing thousands.
- 1346 The Black Plague strikes the Mongol army at Kaffa and will spread to Europe.
- 1347 The Chagatai Khanate splits into Mawarannahr and Moghulistan, maintaining a fiction of unity.
- 1359 Red Turban rebels burn Shangdu.
- 1368 The Ming dynasty forms. Daidu is burned. Toghon Temur departs China for Mongolia.
- 1370 Yuan emperor Toghon Temur dies at Karakorum. Timur-i Leng become the ruler of Mawarannahr.
- 1380 Battle of Kulikovo Pole in Russia.
- 1382 Toqtamysh unifies the Golden Horde and sacks Moscow.
- 1395 Timur-i Leng defeats Toqtamysh and sacks New Sarai.
- 1405 Timur-i Leng dies at Otrar in 1405.
- 1480 Battle of the Ugra River. Muscovy becomes independent.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

OVERVIEW ESSAY

The government of the Mongol Empire existed in a state of constant evolution as the empire expanded. What functioned during the time of Chinggis Khan was woefully inadequate during the reign of Ogodei. By the era of Mongke Khan, massive reforms were necessary to rein in expenses, cut corruption, and begin the centralization of authority. Most of the government structures remained the same, and the rulers, regardless of whom, continued to use the *yasa*, a legal code, and continued to demonstrate their authority by empowering agents with *paizas*, or tablets of authority. Most of the inadequacies of the Mongol government had less to do with the overall theory of government, which was rooted in the idea that the Mongols ruled by the will of heaven and that those who disobeyed rebelled against heaven, and more with internal struggles that undermined central authority.

Many of Mongke's reforms had their root changes made to the Mongol government during the regency of Toregene, the wife of Ogodei. She became the regent after his death and ruled as regent for six years. One of the primary jobs of the regent was to arrange for a *quriltai* to select a new ruler. As Toregene sought to elevate her son Guyuk to the throne, she manipulated the government to accumulate sufficient wealth to secure support for him. To do this she had to place her own supporters in the Mongol bureaucracy, replacing many talented individuals, such as Yelu Chucai and Chinqai. While the empire had not yet reached the degree of centralization that it would reach under Mongke, Toregene restored many of the privileges of the *altan urugh*. This made the Mongol imperial government less effective, it did achieve her goal, and Guyuk was elected.

Guyuk's election, however, led to another change in the government, and not only in terms of who ruled. Guyuk had to deal with a threat from his great-uncle Temuge, which ended with the latter's execution and effectively removed any chance of the khanship moving to a different branch of the *altan urugh*. From this point, only the sons of Chinggis Khan would be considered. Furthermore, Guyuk then proceeded to reverse the changes his mother made to the government. His short reign (1246–1248) did not permit further centralization of authority. Nonetheless, he did restore many dismissed officials to power.

While many outsiders were shocked that a woman served as the ruler of the Mongol Empire for six years, considering the position of women within the Mongol court, it was not necessarily surprising. Unlike in Christendom, the Islamic world, or Confucian

China, women in the Mongol Empire held considerable status and were directly involved in politics, and not just behind the scenes as in other societies. The Mongol queens in particular were powerful and could not only policy shape directly but could also influence society through access to their own independent wealth. Indeed, the women of the Mongol Empire played an important role in the policy of religious toleration.

While religious toleration was an official policy of the Mongol Empire since the reign of Chinggis Khan, after the dissolution of the empire it became more difficult to maintain. Many Mongol queens promoted the policy, serving as patrons for the constructions of mosques, churches, and Buddhist temples regardless of their own religion. Their support was subtle but instrumental. The Mongols often moved populations who brought not only their material baggage with them but also their cultural baggage, which included religion. Thus, Muslims and Nestorian Christians entered China, while Buddhists moved into the Middle East. Often these “aliens” also served in governmental posts, making them very dependent on the Mongols. In the Middle East, with its wide variety of religions and ethnic minorities, this was an easy policy to follow without importing large numbers of immigrants. In China, the vast Han population, with its well-entrenched culture, proved more difficult. As a result, the Mongols brought in thousands of foreigners from throughout their empire who also brought their immigrant religions to China. This led to the expansion of those religions. Unfortunately, it also meant that in the waning days of the Mongol Empire, those religions were often viewed as being associated with the Mongols and were targeted accordingly by Chinese rebels.

Regardless of who ruled, the empire practiced a system of dual government in which a military government and a civilian government functioned in tandem and often overlapped. This is not to suggest that it functioned perfectly. Often rivalries flared between the military leaders and their civilian counterparts. The idea was that gradually a civilian government replaced the military throughout the empire, thus allowing the imperial government to have a more centralized and direct rule over every aspect. It was not a seamless transition, though, as the military governor lost considerable revenue and other perks with the transition. Additionally, he also had to move to new pastures, which were not always greener—literally and figuratively.

While the Mongols were nomads, they quickly learned the value of having a nonmobile capital, even as the khan often remained nomadic. A sedentary capital was necessary for the simple purpose of not only housing the bureaucratic staff but also providing subject rulers, emissaries, and foreign dignitaries a permanent destination to conduct business with the Mongols. As wealth accumulated, it also became important for the Mongols as a storehouse. Chinggis Khan did not have a true capital, but his son Ogodei constructed Karakorum, located in the Orkhon Valley of Mongolia, which had political and spiritual significance that predated the Mongols.

Karakorum was not the only city that the Mongols built as a governmental center. In the western territories, which became known as the Golden Horde, Batu built Sarai. Later another city was built in the 14th century, Sarai al-Jadid (New Sarai), which replaced Batu’s city not only in importance but also in size. In the Chagatai Khanate, Almaliq served as a capital of sorts, although most of the Chagatayid khans never truly embraced the function of a capital. The il-khans also used preexisting cities. Hulegu

used Maragha as his capital, but his son Abaqa then relocated to the commercial city of Tabriz. This city remained the Il-Khanid capital until the reign of Oljeitu, who constructed a new city called Sultaniyya. Khubilai Khan established two capitals after deciding that Karakorum was not only vulnerable to attack by his rival Qaidu but also too remote to effectively control his conquests in China. Thus, Khubilai Khan first built Daidu near the former Jin capital of Zhongdu. He then later built Shangdu, which also served as a retreat to escape the heat of the summer. In some ways, by moving to Shangdu, Khubilai maintained the practice of winter and summer pastures, albeit in a more urban context.

Two of the most important events that affected the government of the Mongol Empire are intertwined. The first is when Khubilai became khan after the death of Mongke in 1259. An orderly succession principle did not exist, leading to Khubilai and his brother Ariq Boke holding competing *quriltai*s (congresses) in which important decisions were made. Ideally, all of the Chinggisid princes and the leading commanders would attend these affairs, particularly when a new khan was to be selected. This was not to be in either case. As a result, civil war broke out between the two, with factions aligning not only among personality preference but also in terms of how the two brothers viewed the empire. Ariq Boke was more of a conservative, wanting to rule the empire in a manner similar to his predecessors so that it continued to benefit not only the *altan urugh*, or the family of Chinggis Khan, but also the nomadic element in general. Khubilai, on the other hand, was more progressive and recognized the need for change as the empire continued to accrue an ever-increasing sedentary population.

Their civil war then led to the dissolution of the empire. The civil war or wars were not only over the conservative versus progressive view of government; other issues factored into the violence. One of the largest was territorial claims. Mongke had attempted to centralize authority under imperial control, removing some territories and claims from the traditional *ulus* structure of the other Chinggisid princes. He then used his brothers as il-khans, or viceroys. The Chagataid princes not only lost territory through the Toluid Revolution that brought Mongke to the throne but also lost additional territory in modern-day Afghanistan and Iran with the arrival of Hulegu, Mongke's brother and viceroy. The Golden Horde had a similar experience in Transcaucasia and Iran, which led to almost immediate invasion after Mongke's death.

As Khubilai Khan became khan without a true traditional *quriltai*, his rule was never truly accepted by the entire empire. Only the Il-Khanate recognized it on a consistent basis. The Chagatai Khanate wavered, depending on the ruler and how close one of Khubilai's armies was to the border. Khubilai learned from this and attempted to move from a *quriltai*-elected successor to a designate successor model. His first successor, however, died before him, and thus he chose his grandson Temur Oljeitu, who proved to an excellent choice. Not all chosen heirs proved to be as capable, however. Furthermore, once the prince was chosen, this also permitted political factions to form in an effort to control and influence the prince. Those princes left on the outside looking in also joined in the scheming in an effort to either secure favor or even replace the designated heir. For the Yuan, this meant that political factionalism became rampant, particularly after Temur Oljeitu's reign, and less attention was paid to the proper running

of the empire. Thus, when Toghon Temur, the last Yuan emperor, took the throne, he was saddled with an impossible situation. Even with a long reign, there were too many obstacles to overcome, and decay could not be reversed, particularly when he also had to deal with a series of rebellions and natural disasters. Indeed, Toghon Temur's reign could easily serve as a model of how not to govern an empire. His reign led to the abandonment of China in 1368 and the creation of the Northern Yuan Empire. For 20 years it too seemed a creditable entity, but then it quickly succumbed to intrigue and factionalism.

In the Golden Horde as well as the Il-Khanate, the *quriltai* still served as the key method of selecting a new khan, although the il-khans did dabble with naming a heir, but the practice was not formally imposed. The key issue, however, was the concentration of power in the hands of non-Chinggisids. Although there were many Chinggisids, with the dissolution of the empire there were now fewer in each successor khanate. Many commanders, such as Nogai in the Golden Horde, benefited from this. Too often, the candidate with the greatest military support became the khan. This made figures such as Nogai and Edigu in the Golden Horde and Choban in the Il-Khanate virtual kingmakers. They also had little interest in supporting candidates who might consider centralizing imperial authority. Only when rulers could mask their intentions and then quietly build support could they successfully challenge a kingmaker such as Nogai.

Daidu

Although Karakorum was once perfectly situated as the capital of the Mongol Empire, Khubilai's war with Ariq Boke demonstrated that it was vulnerable. Furthermore, as Khubilai was intent on conquering the rest of China, Karakorum was too far removed to serve as an effective capital. Rather than use the old Jin capital of Zhongdu, in 1266 Khubilai ordered a new city to be built. Originally the city was known by a Turkic name Khanbaligh (City of the Khan), Marco Polo's "Cambulac." In 1272 Khubilai renamed it Dadu, Chinese for "Great Capital," which became Daidu in Mongolian. His astrologers determined that it would be more auspicious to build a new city. It was also rumored that if he used Zhongdu, the population of the city would rebel. Thus, Daidu was built about a half mile northeast of Zhongdu, with the Changpu River separating them.

The location was intentional. It was an area outside of the traditional heartland of Chinese civilization. Located near the most populous Han areas of the empire but not immersed in it, Daidu remained near Mongolia, allowing Khubilai to retain control of the steppes. Like Karakorum, Daidu faced food shortages, as the region did not produce sufficient grain, but Khubilai sought to alleviate this by extending the Grand Canal to supply provisions from the south.

Planned by Li Bingzhong, the city was modeled on ideas from an ancient Confucian text known as the *Zhouli*, a text on ideal government that included the layout of an ideal capital city. While Li Bingzhong may have selected the location based on astrology, geomancy, and Confucian ideal, Khubilai's participation in the decision should not be

ignored. The city's location (now Beijing) was situated in the most populous area of his empire. While Shangdu was built earlier, Daidu became the true Mongol capital.

While a Confucian planned the city, the construction itself was supervised by a Muslim, Yeheidie'er, most likely from Central Asia. The city was built in a rectangle with a ratio of 8:9 so that the north-south walls were 4.13 miles (6,652.2 meters) and the east-west walls were 4.65 miles (7,484.4 meters), enclosing almost 18 square miles of the city and perhaps over 1 million people. The walls of stamped earth were massive, with a base of 10 paces (about 30 feet) and tapered to 3 paces (9 feet) at the top. Each wall also included three gates, evenly spaced. According to Marco Polo, each entrance also possessed a palace, but it is more likely that these were fortifications or barbicans that housed an alleged 1,000 men. Other fortifications existed in each corner to house the city garrison.

As a new and planned city, Daidu was built on a grid plan with wide and straight streets, with 72 sizable city squares. The number of city squares was, like the 8:9 proportions of the walls, based on sacred numbers. Despite the use of large numbers of foreign artisans, the city's plan called for most of the buildings to have Chinese architecture. The decision to use Chinese forms was deliberate, as Khubilai recognized the need to appear as a Chinese emperor to legitimate his rule in the eyes of the majority of his empire's population.

In the Daidu's center sat a bell tower. The tower watchman used a water clock to gauge the time and rang the bell every hour, but it also signaled the curfew hour. When the bell rang three times, all inhabitants were to remain indoors until dawn. The city garrison regularly patrolled the streets to enforce the curfew as well as to maintain order. If we are to trust Marco Polo, the city was not safe at night. Guards walked the streets in patrols of 30 to 40 men. Those found outside after curfew were arrested and held until an investigation the next morning. Those found being out without good reason were punished. The others were released. The tower also served the public in other less confining ways by keeping watch for fires. If a fire was spotted, the watchman rang the bell to notify the public. As a separate fire department did not exist, the citizenry would then hasten to fight the blaze, lest it consume the entire city.

The imperial residences were not located in the center of the city but rather in the southern section. This arrangement permitted the emperor to enter and vacate the city without actually entering the main city. Although this may have made the palace more vulnerable to outside attack, Khubilai had little fear of that. Rebellion within the city was more likely than foreign invasion. Interior walls of 1.37 miles (2,217.6 meters) for the north-south walls and 1.55 miles (2,494.8 meters) for the east-west walls separated the city from the imperial city. Most of the government officials resided within the imperial city. In addition to the reception halls for visiting dignitaries, storehouses, residences of officials, and other governmental buildings, the imperial city held lakes, gardens, and bridges that added a scenic beauty. The emperor's own residence was separated by another wall from the palace, protected by north-south walls of 909.44 yards (831.6 meters) and 1,091.33 yards (997.92 meters) for the east-west walls. While a palace existed, there was sufficient open space for traditional Mongolian yurts, or *gers*, to be erected. Indeed, Khubilai and other Mongols tended to reside in these rather than in the palace itself.

Despite its glory, Daidu had a short life expectancy of just over 100 years from the beginning of its construction. In 1368, the city was burned in the turmoil of the Red Turban Rebellions and the rise of the Ming dynasty. Modern-day Beijing sprawls across medieval Daidu.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; *Key Events:* Red Turban Revolt; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Zhongdu; *Primary Documents:* Document 35

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Dual Government

On the steppe the Mongols drew upon their own traditions of governance, ones ideally adapted to Mongolian circumstances. In early Mongolian times these above all focused on organizing a herding life. This often involved the hierarchies of Mongolian kinship organization to achieve the goal of determining who nomadized where, a vital concern in the steppe where pastures were often highly sensitive to overuse. Conflict easily also arose over pasture use.

As the wars of unification continued, we find references to structures that have little or nothing directly to do with organizing pastoral life. Some of the competing chieftains, for example, had bodyguards, an important source of administrative reach in early Mongolia; and a growing literacy had begun to make real records possible, usually in connection with these bodyguards.

Developments noted as taking place elsewhere in *The Secret History of the Mongols*, such as having a bodyguard (*keshik*), became particularly significant under Chinggis Khan, whose bodyguard was rapidly expanded from a few hundred to quite large proportions, more than a *tumen*, or force of 10,000. As such the bodyguard became the pivot (*qol*) army, the center of the Mongolian battle line when the khan was present. The khan's bodyguard by this time no longer was comprised simply of guards but included specialized cadres to manage not only the Mongolian court but also points outside the court, sometimes well beyond the court when necessary in which case members of the bodyguard could be sent out physically to represent the khan locally. Or at least they had functions extending beyond the court.

In addition to the bodyguard as the prime center of court protection and administration, Chinggis Khan had also to deal with his clan. His connection with his clan was

associated with a particular officer, the *jarquchi*, charged with settling any disputes over booty and also with such things as taking censuses and distributing new acquisitions. At first there was apparently only one—an imperial prince, Belgutei—but soon other officials called *jarquchi* proliferated. The khan as head of the *ulus* (meaning “patrimony”), the totality of the Mongol Empire as viewed from the perspective of the imperial clan, appointed his own *jarquchi*, as did powerful princes of the blood.

As the Mongols expanded their empire, they took their institutions with them. The tribal bodies comprised by the *mingan*, for example, moved into or near sedentary domains to form occupation forces, *tamma*. Also moving into the occupied sedentary world were officials associated with the bodyguard but installed locally, such as in Zhongdu in former Jin China, where the administration of Mongol China was headquartered. There an administration came into being comprised of *jarquchis* and other officials such as *bichigchi* and *daruqachi*, the on-the-spot representatives of the khan and other powerful persons. Since others besides the khan were involved in Zhongdu, for example, the administrations that evolved were very much joint administrations, representing all relevant and interested parties.

From a Mongol perspective the system was all very logical, but how to explain what was going on to local people who perhaps did not speak Mongolian or were totally unfamiliar with the world of the steppe? The solution was to adopt local terminology to express equivalent realities. Thus Yelu Chucai, the famous Khitan minister of Chinggis Khan and Ogodei, referred to himself for local consumption as a *Zhongshu ling*, head of a nonexistent Chinese-style central secretariat, whereas in reality he was only a bodyguard (*bichigchi*), although a most important one.

In the west a variety of Persian and Arabic terms were used for the same purpose. Slowly, local administrations generally using local terminology to express local governmental realities emerged in all areas of the Mongol Empire. This was an important development, although the underlying structures remained the same in a system of dual government, but local terms also involved their own structures, and these influenced the mature system that emerged.

How this worked can best be seen in the Mongol-Chinese system of the *xingsheng* as it was applied to occupied China. *Xingsheng*, meaning “to carry out supervision” in Jin times, when it was borrowed by the Mongols, referred to officials of the central government sent out to manage locally on the spot and deal with special problems. In Mongol China, the term was applied to the branch administration, the joint administrations that had emerged in Zhongdu and in other places, such as in Yunnan under Bukharan Sayid Ajall (1211–1279), a *jarquchi*, and his colleagues. Whatever the terminology involved, and officers were rarely called strictly by their Mongolian titles, what emerged quickly had a profound administrative influence. In Mongol China, for example, the joint administration, *xingsheng*, of local areas ultimately reemerged as the province of the mature Mongol administration, the term and the province system itself persisting to this day as *sheng*, the modern Chinese word for “province.” Identical structures existed in the west but with Persian or Turkic terminology. Arghun-aqa is described in Persian terms but was almost certainly a *jarquchi* assisted by other *jarquchis* and *bichigchis* and others in administering Khurasan and Iran.

In Mongol China, which physically acquired the imperial bodyguard of empire after the civil wars of the 1260s, the old system persisted of sending out members of the bodyguard to take over functions in the central government, now separate from the bodyguard establishment, and elsewhere. Such officers functioned dually as members of the bodyguard and as officials in the civil government, with Chinese terminology and associated Chinese organization applying. Such individuals could even rise as high as a prime minister, but as *Yuan shi* (History of the Yuan Dynasty) makes clear, when their civilian appointments were done, they had to go back and serve again in the bodyguard, no matter how lowly their function. Among those noting this system was Marco Polo, who records that the real authority found in the civilian government of Khubilai was the more than 30 judges and *jarquchi* and *duanshi guan* officials deciding matters in Chinese. Such individuals as *jarquchis* and other Chinese-style officers were sprinkled through the dual structures of Mongol China. They made it work.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Organization and Administration: Keshik; Khurasan; Ulus; Yelu Chucai; Individuals: Chinggis Khan; Military: Tamma; Key Places: Zhongdu*

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Government Structure

The popular image of the Mongols is that they paid little attention to actually governing their empire, preferring to simply reap the rewards. In this view, the Mongols relied heavily on the expertise of the conquered. While the Mongols did rely on conquered personnel, they were also very concerned about the organization and administration of the empire as demonstrated at the *quriltai* of 1206.

All power flowed from the khan. There were limits to the khan's power, and it was necessary to maintain the support of the *altan urugh*, or Golden Family. Combined, the *altan urugh* and the khan viewed the empire as their personal possession. In this sense, the empire was similar to a family business. Each prince had authority in his own *ulus*, which was only superseded by the khan's authority or the regional khan (such as Batu or Chagatai). This also meant, however, that the members of the *altan urugh* had

representatives to watch over their interests throughout the imperial administrative apparatus.

The second institution of the government was the *keshik*, or imperial bodyguard. With 10,000 members, the *keshik* also served as a training ground for commanders as well as administrators and governors. While in the *keshik*, members were part of the khan's household staff. When he needed a new governor or other functionary, he could pick someone from the *keshik* based on the individual's ability and his personal knowledge of that individual. When the khan did this, it could reduce cronyism and ensure the integrity of the imperial government. To be sure, the system was not perfect or always upheld, but by and large the *keshik* could produce capable individuals of a consistent quality.

Members of the *keshik* also entered service in the Central Secretariat. The Mongols also appreciated talent and actively recruited from the conquered. Knowledge of Mongolian or Uyghur was a priority, but Khitan, Persian, or Chinese proved useful and brought figures such as Yelu Chucai and Mahmud Yalavach into their service.

The provincial governors, or *jarquchis*, who came from the *keshik* were answerable only to the Mongol khan. They were assisted by *daruqachin* (sing. *daruqachi*), who were governors and representatives stationed in various towns or districts. As governors they ruled directly, assisted by a staff of scribes. As representatives, the *daruqachin* worked alongside a native local ruler. The *daruqachin* were known as *shahnas* in Islamic areas and as *basqaqs* in predominantly Turkic regions. The terms did not necessarily reflect the ethnic identity of the official.

This served as an imperial level of authority. Intermingled with this and functioning below the *daruqachin* was a local level of government that typically functioned as it did before submission to the Mongols. Local rulers maintained their posts if they submitted to the Mongols and did as ordered. If the Mongols were satisfied with the local ruler, not only did they not interfere, but often the *daruqachi* did not maintain a presence, only coming to the district periodically.

When considering the Mongol government, one should never discount the military. In addition to the *keshik*, *tanma* military units played a key role in creating a dual government of civil and military authority. In the initial conquests the *tammachi* governed, but over time their authority became more limited, and authority was transferred to civil authorities. This not only prevented the Mongols from overextending their military but also allowed them to integrate newly conquered lands through a slow but methodical process.

Because of the breadth of the empire, it contained many ethnicities and cultures. The imperial government reflected this. It was not unusual to use nonnatives to rule in more hostile areas. This ensured the loyalty of the officials, thus making it less likely that they might rebel. Occasionally it could backfire and cause the populace to rebel, however. In China, because of their distrust of the Chinese population, the Mongols preferred Semuren, or what might be termed "westerners" (anyone born west of China), and non-Chinese such as the Jurchen and Khitan. Marco Polo gained employment because of this preference, although his claims of high rank can be dismissed. Generally speaking, the *shis*, traditional Confucian bureaucrats of China, were often left out of the

administration, although certain princes had a better appreciation of the *shis*. The lack of inclusion was due to the distrust of the Mongols of the more populous Hans as well as a lack of cooperation of many of the *shis*. In the latter case, they chose to avoid serving the Mongols due to the Mongols' disregard of the Confucian system but also because the Mongols often restricted the positions and level of authority they could hold in the government. The Yuan Empire would wrestle with the issue throughout its existence.

The government of the Mongol Empire was a Mongolian entity that was flexible and efficient when managed properly. However, because of its flexibility, it was also easy for corruption to penetrate it and create the circumstances whereby the population was heavily exploited.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration: Keshik; Ulus; Yuan Empire; Individuals: Batu; Chagatai Khan; Groups and Organizations: Jurchen; Khitan; Semuren; Uyghurs; Key Events: Quriltai of 1206*

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Guyuk's Election (1246)

The death of Ogodei led to a decade of stability and instability in the Mongol Empire. The stability came from the fact that the Mongol Empire ceased to expand for the most part, allowing for some areas to be integrated into the empire. On the other hand, the political instability caused by political machinations of the regents threatened to fracture the empire. The root of the problem was that Ogodei died without securing the throne for his successor, and unlike his father, for all his accomplishments he lacked the gravitas to make his word law.

Upon his death, his wife Toregene became the regent, initially coruling with another wife, Moge Khatun, who died shortly afterward. As the regent, Toregene declared a period of mourning and gathered the princes and generals for a *quriltai* to decide the new khan. The process took time and was complicated by the death of Chagatai in 1242, which made Batu the senior Chinggisid prince.

Although many begrudged Batu for his father's (Jochi) questionable heritage, it excluded him from the throne but not from his position within the empire. Guyuk had participated in the Western Campaign but had been dismissed by Subedei after he insulted Batu during a feast. Although Subedei could not punish him because he was a prince, Ogodei could, and he was furious. Ogodei stripped Guyuk of his rank and ordered him to serve in the front lines of the war with the Song Empire. Before the punishment could be carried out, however, Ogodei died. Since Guyuk was one of Ogodei's sons, he was a viable candidate for the throne—something that clearly did not please Batu.

When calls for the *quriltai* came, Batu stalled, as he had no interest in seeing his rival come to the throne even though this was not certain. Instead, he focused on consolidating his rule and building Sarai, a capital on the Volga. Between this and a case of gout, Batu avoided going to Mongolia and was able to stall for several years. Batu's actions, however, were not the only reasons for the postponed *quriltai*.

Toregene used the time to secure support for Guyuk and made no effort to hasten the *quriltai*. She cultivated relations with the various princes, sending them valuable gifts. Additionally, Toregene made substantial changes to the administration that were necessary to secure the throne for her son.

One change was the taxation system developed by Yelu Chucai and Mahmud Yalavach with tax farming. In tax farming, the process of tax collection is farmed out to private individuals, who submit a bid to tax a territory by agreeing to produce a certain amount of taxes in a specific time frame. The tax collector kept a percentage as payment. The privatization of taxation created a system that permitted the tax farmer to exploit the tax base and enrich himself. While this inevitably produced a great amount of revenue in the short term, the long-term aspects were devastating. Ogodei's efficient administration was dismantled in favor of short-term gains, with key figures removed from their position, including Yelu Chucai and others. Many fled to the safety of the courts of princes who disagreed with Toregene's policies, such as Batu and Toregene's other son, Koten.

Through these changes, Toregene accumulated wealth to finance her campaign for Guyuk's election. Due to his loss of status from the Western Campaign as well as a chronic yet unidentified illness, Guyuk's election was not guaranteed. At one point he was Ogodei's heir, but Ogodei also considered another possibility, his grandson Shiremun, who was significantly younger than Guyuk. A third legitimate contender was Koten, whom Chinggis Khan had recommended as a suitable successor to Ogodei. On paper, Koten was a viable candidate. Not only had he led armies in the final stages of the Mongol-Jin War, but he also began the conquest of Tibet, operating from his appanage in the former territories of Xi Xia. Although Koten possessed the military ability and his nomination was supported by the sacred words of Chinggis Khan, his suggestion was made prior to Ogodei's ascension to power. Many things had changed, including Koten developing an illness that remains unidentified.

When the *quriltai* was held in 1245, Batu did not come and instead sent representatives, including his brothers Orda and Berke. At times Batu's absence has been viewed as a boycott, but while his absence was notable, the fact that Orda (Jochi's eldest son)

A CHALLENGE TO THE THRONE

After his selection as khan, Guyuk almost immediately had to deal with a crisis. Having grown weary of the delays in the *quriltai*, Chinggis Khan's youngest brother Temuge Otchigin attempted to seize power. He had a sudden change of mind, however, because of the timely appearance of Malik Oghul, Ogodei's youngest son, with his retinue en route to the *quriltai*. Upon seeing his great-nephew, Temuge Otchigin repented his actions. He perhaps realized that his efforts were for naught, as no one else considered him a candidate. Additionally, in order to seize the throne he would face the combined might of the offspring of Chinggis Khan. Nonetheless, Guyuk's actions were not forgotten.

After assuming power, Guyuk ordered an investigation of the affair. This was carried out by Mongke, the eldest son of Tolui, and Orda, Batu's brother. Their participation is noteworthy, as it is clear that Guyuk sought the participation of other Chinggisids, thus providing a more balanced perspective. Furthermore, both Mongke and Orda were veterans of the invasion of Europe. Despite the incident with Batu, the ties of those who served in the invasion of Europe were deep. The importance of this shared experience continued to be important after Guyuk's reign. The two princes worked alone in their investigation. Temuge was deemed guilty of conspiring against the khan and put to death. This also marks a departure from traditional steppe empires in which the line of succession could be vertical (father to son) or horizontal (brother to brother). This is not to say that a lateral succession was impossible, but now it could only occur among those descended from Chinggis Khan.

was present along with Berke (Jochi's third son) indicates that the Jochids had not withdrawn from participating in the decision of the empire. Batu's absences may have been a demonstration of his disdain for Guyuk, perhaps even believing that the *quriltai* could not be held without his presence. If so, he was quite mistaken. Toregene successfully arranged for the *quriltai* and secured the support of the majority of the princes. Although there was much debate about the qualifications of the candidate, Guyuk emerged as the successor due to his experience, seniority, and Toregene's efforts.

Despite the election of Guyuk in 1246, he did not immediately assume the reins of power. Instead, for the next two or three months his mother wielded power and appears to have only reluctantly relinquished it, after which she died. Her death marks a shift for Guyuk. Almost immediately he reversed her changes to the Mongol administration, with the surviving former ministers resuming their positions.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics: Quriltai; Toregene Khatun; Organization and Administration: Mahmud Yalavach; Yelu Chucai; Individuals: Batu; Chagatai Khan; Guyuk; Ogodei Khan*

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Immigrant Religions in Mongol China

The Mongol conquest planted the seeds for a new religious landscape in China that lasted long after the Mongols were driven out of China in the 1360s. From these seeds grew a more truly multiconfessional and ethnically diverse society than had previously been the case. The religiously tolerant Mongols moved many people of other faiths into China to help them rule, and Muslims and Christians were especially favored by the Mongols with important positions of power. As a result, both Islam and Christianity came into more direct contact with the Chinese than ever before.

ISLAM

While Islam had been in China for several centuries, it was practiced only among isolated communities in the north and the far southeast before the Mongol conquest. As early as 1203 the future Chinggis Khan encountered Muslim merchants in the steppe, where he was preparing for battle with other nomadic tribes. A company of Muslim merchants joined his group, pledging their help in the coming military campaign. This created a favorable impression of Muslims among the Mongols that led to their employment as trusted specialists, administrators, and brokers in international trade. For example, Muslim craftsmen were employed to help construct the new Mongol capital city Karakorum built by Chinggis's son Ogodei, and Muslim military technologists introduced ballistic warfare technology that the Mongols needed to conquer fortified cities with walls. Even the brutal campaign waged by Chinggis against the Central Asian Islamic state of Khwarazm did not change positive Mongol views of Muslims. Indeed, Chinggis's first envoy to Khwarazm before their shah decided to fight the Mongols was a Muslim from that very state! That man, Mahmud Yalavach, is a great example of the important roles that Muslims played in the emerging empire.

Chinggis's son and successor, Ogodei, expanded Mongol reliance on Muslim personnel in newly conquered areas, and it was in this period that Islam first made its way into Mongol China in a serious fashion. Ogodei put Mahmud in charge of rebuilding Central Asia in the early 1230s, and he reformed the tax system and oversaw the rebuilding of destroyed cities, agricultural villages, and the irrigation infrastructure so the local people could once again produce food and pay taxes to the Mongols. In 1251, Chinggis's grandson Mongke sent him to northern China to oversee a similar rebuilding campaign, since the Mongol conquests had destroyed many towns and cities there.

Muslims such as Mahmud were especially useful to the Mongols in bringing peace and order to newly conquered areas, probably because they had a lot of experience in

civil management. About the same time as Mahmud, another Central Asian Muslim was rising to prominence in China. Sayyid Ajall Shams al-Din, from Bukhara, was sent by Khubilai to be the governor of the newly conquered province of Yunnan in 1273. Men such as Mahmud and Sayyid were both Muslims from Central Asia, and they and thousands like them brought their religious practices with them into China. In addition to those men who served in the Mongol government, thousands of Muslims came into China as members of the military. Most Central Asian Muslims came from cultures that raised horses and had cavalry experience, and they helped to augment the small numbers of Mongol warriors.

The forced migration of these people into China caused new communities of Muslims to take root all across China, and mosques and religious leaders were needed to serve these new groups. Most of the historic mosques in China were founded in that time, and many of the most prominent Muslim families in China trace their roots back to ancestors who came with the Mongols.

CHRISTIANITY

Christianity was like Islam in China before the Mongol conquest, practiced by a few isolated groups. Some Christians had lived in northern China in earlier eras, especially during the Tang dynasty when they had churches and a large community in the capital of Chang'an. But their influence suffered with the decline of the Tang state, and by the time Chinggis emerged to lead the Mongol tribes, Christianity had moved north. Nestorian Christianity found a receptive audience among certain Turkic tribes, especially the Uyghurs and Onggud, who lived in permanent communities in the frontier zone between China and the steppe. The Nestorian faith, also known as the Church of the East, was declared a forbidden heresy in the West in the 430s, and most believers fled east along the overland trade routes. Because those Turkic tribes voluntarily submitted to the Mongols, some members of Chinggis's clan, especially women, converted to Nestorian Christianity. Its influence on Mongol China is seen in the high degree of religious toleration allowed by the Mongols. For example, Khubilai's mother, Sorqoqtani Beki, was a Nestorian Christian, and she promoted the spread of that religion. But she was also known for her financial support of Buddhist, Daoist, and Islamic religious centers and personnel. She also brought her son up in that same open-minded spirit.

The Nestorian Christian community was active across northern China, and Khubilai helped to finance the religious pilgrimage of two Nestorian monks, Rabban Sauma and Markos, to Persia to see Nestorian Christian holy sites. Khubilai was not a Christian, and he had political reasons for sponsoring their trip. Their account is remarkable because it gives hints of the large community of Nestorian Christians who lived across northern China all the way into Persia. Just like the Muslims, those Christian communities arose, with the settlement of Nestorian Christian administrators and military men serving the Mongols. Unlike Islam, Nestorianism mostly died out in China after the Mongol period, but it is tempting to speculate on its role in preparing the way for later Catholic and Protestant iterations of Christianity that are also now firmly embedded in China.

Michael C. Brose

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Mahmud Yalavach; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; *Groups and Organizations:* Nestorian Christians; Uyghurs; *Key Events:* Otrar Massacre

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Inju

The word *inju* is a corruption of the Mongolian *emchu*, meaning "private," "personal property," and is used widely in the Persian sources written during the 13th and 14th centuries. The term usually referred to the patrimony of a Chinggisid prince, which he had inherited from his father, either during the latter's lifetime or after his death. This property could take the form of land, animals, or people, who were bound to serve the prince on a hereditary basis. *Inju* property made up approximately one-third of all land in the Il-Khanate and was a significant source of revenue for its owners. The *inju* revenues of the future il-khan Ghazan in the province of Fars, in southern Iran, totalled nearly 1 million dinars per year and command of an army of 10,000 soldiers. Royal *inju* land was acquired most commonly through the confiscation of property belonging to corrupt officials. Grants of *inju* land could also be made to individual princes by the il-khan himself, and naturally, *inju* land could be inherited by the holder's children. It has also been suggested that *inju* land could be created through conquest. For example, it is believed that Hulegu's conquests in Iraq and northern Iran became part of his personal *inju* holdings.

The appanages granted by Chinggis Khan and his heir Ogodei to princes and commanders for their service against the Jin dynasty of northern China were probably an antecedent to the *inju* property later described in the Il-Khanate. These appanages, known as *qubi* (lit. "share"), entitled the holders to a percentage of the revenues paid by the empire's sedentary subjects to the treasury. During the first two years of Ogodei's reign the owners of *qubi* were afforded unchecked power over these households. Chinese officials blamed abuses associated with *qubi* land distribution for causing heavy depopulation in northern China, as local farmers migrated away from their homes in the hope of escaping the exactions of the *qubi* holders. The imposition of a centrally controlled revenue system in 1231 deprived the princes and commanders of the right to collect taxes from their own *qubi* lands and in many cases even obviated the need for them to reside in the lands they controlled. Nevertheless, *qubi* landholdings continued to proliferate during the reign of Ogodei, with 900,000 of the 1.73 million

households in northern China registered as *qubi* held by the leading princes and commanders.

Inju was one of two broad classifications for state-owned land in the Il-Khanate, the other being referred to as *dalay*. The distinction between the two forms of land related largely to the way that they were managed. *Dalay* land was placed under the control of the civil bureaucracy, which collected and retained the revenues in the state treasury. *Inju* land, on the other hand, was registered, managed, and taxed by the prince or his representative. The il-khan's *inju*, however, was managed by an independent office attached to his household that was staffed by senior members of the royal *keshik*.

The distinction between *dalay* and royal *inju* land became very important after 1284, when a senior Mongol commander named Buqa usurped many of the powers of the ruling il-khan, Arghun (r. 1284–1294). Buqa's control over the state treasury made Arghun eager to classify much of the realm as *inju* land, which he claimed to have inherited from his father, Abaqa. In several areas, most notably in Fars, the status of the land was contested between Arghun and Buqa, eventually prompting an armed conflict between the two to determine where the revenues should flow. Buqa's defeat and execution in 1289 resulted in the combination of *dalay* and *inju* land management under the ministers appointed by the il-khan. The streamlining of revenue collection was completed during the reign of Arghun's brother and heir, Geikhatu (r. 1291–1295), who formally dismissed the two officials appointed to manage the *inju* lands and entrusted their duties to his chief minister, Sadr al-Din Ahmad Khalidi. Yet references to a separate office for the management of *inju* property continue to appear well into the 14th century, suggesting that the situation remained fluid.

The sources also make reference to another property classification, known as *tunluq*, that seems to have been a pension awarded from the revenues of a territory without conveying proprietorship on the holder. The most notable example of such land grants occurred during the reign of Abaqa, when his father's junior wives and sons arrived from Mongolia in 1270. These princes and queens had come to the Il-Khanate over a decade after Hulegu's conquest of Baghdad and had not been present when the land was divided among his children and commanders. Abaqa sought to provide them with an income by granting the senior queen, Qutui Khatun, the region of Diyarbakr (in modern-day Turkey) as *tunluq* to cover the expenses of herself and her children.

There is still much that we do not know about the transmission and management of *inju* land, and it remained contentious. Toward the end of the 13th century the status of *inju* land the descendants of the second il-khan, Abaqa, claimed almost the entire Il-Khanate as their exclusive *inju* to justify their bid for the throne. There are also examples of confiscated *inju* being returned to their owners or transmitted to relatives outside the nuclear family on the basis of friendship rather than kinship. In many cases the absence of either a will or any fixed procedure for transmitting *inju* property led to disputes over the legal status of property throughout the Mongol Empire.

Michael Hope

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; Taxation; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Ghazan; Hulegu; Ogodei Khan; *Key Places:* Jin Empire

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Karakorum

Karakorum came into existence in the Orkhon River Basin during the reign of Ogodei. This area had long been viewed as an important spot in Mongolia. Thus, by choosing this location and beginning construction in 1235, Ogodei further legitimated Chinggisid and Mongol authority. It was a strategic location as well, as Karakorum was the center of the empire, which stretched from the Amu Darya to the Sea of Japan.

Despite being a well-watered area, the Orkhon Basin did not supply enough food to support a city, even a small one such as Karakorum (a population of approximately



Karakorum, the Mongol capital, was located in the Orkhon River Valley in present-day Mongolia. Several other nomadic empires chose this region as their capital due to its lush pastures, abundant water sources, and central location. (Ozur Cagdas/Dreamstime.com)

10,000). Nine hundred cartloads of provisions came to the capital daily to feed the inhabitants. The Mongol khans did not actually reside at Karakorum. Rather, they remained in their nomadic camps in the pastures near the city. Indeed, the papal envoy John of Plano Carpini never entered Karakorum but went directly to Guyuk's camp. Although William of Rubruck visited Karakorum, his encounters with Mongke Khan took place in his camp a few days' journey from Karakorum. On some matters of state the khans came to their capital. Yet for the most part, the khans seemed to have viewed Karakorum as perhaps a garage, a basement, or an attic. In a sense, it is where they kept their stuff. Observers noted that near the palace in Karakorum were many large barn-like buildings that stored both provisions and treasure.

Much of their "stuff" included treasure and loot—plunder brought back from pillaging but also items purchased from merchants. Another part of their "stuff" included artisans that were brought back to Mongolia. William of Rubruck saw many Chinese craftsmen in Karakorum. He observed that they paid taxes in silver and in goods and that they all followed the same craft as their fathers did, producing tools and weapons as well as pottery, including high-quality celadon. William arrived in Karakorum in 1253, so these were second-generation Karakorum residents, descendants of those brought back during the conquest of the Jin Empire. William insinuated that all of the sons followed the same occupation of their father not simply out of tradition but rather out of Mongol decree. This was more than simply the children following tradition and taking up the father's occupation, as was the norm for most of the medieval world. In the Mongolian production centers, all sons followed their father's occupation without opportunity to pursue another vocation as sometimes occurred outside of the empire. Thus, the Mongols ensured that they had the goods they desired. Indeed, many of the artisans who came to Mongolia as a result of the conquests became part of a military-industrial complex, so to speak, to make weapons and armor for the Mongols. Other artisans made luxury items such as *nasij*, the gold-threaded silk brocades that the Mongol nobility cherished and often bestowed on guests as a symbol of honor.

Karakorum itself was a planned and organized city. Indeed, during heavy snows the Mongol government even arranged for snow removal, according to William of Rubruck. Still, it was a small city, but one must take into account that Karakorum was located in Mongolia and that the vast majority of the population of Karakorum were foreigners who comprised the bureaucracy of the empire as well as merchants and the aforementioned artisans. It was truly a polyglot city.

Besides the palace and the royal warehouses, the city also possessed two major commercial districts. One hosted the previously mentioned Chinese artisans. The other was a market, located near the palace and dominated by Muslim merchants, although other merchants and envoys also flocked there. The market dealt in luxury as well as mundane goods but not foodstuffs. One could purchase millet and other grains (when available) by the east gate. The south gate had a market for oxen and carts, presumably because it faced China. Sheep and goats were sold at the west gate, and at the north gate one could buy horses. Curiously, one does not see any mention of a camel market, perhaps due to the fact that their value was easily three times that of any horse. In addition, there were the other buildings of the government for the chancellery and scribes. The city also hosted

OGODEI'S COMMERCIAL POLICY

Much of the success of Karakorum as a commercial center must be attributed to the policies of Ogodei. During his reign he established the storehouses for luxury goods ranging from ingots of gold and silver to silk as well as granaries for the grains that came as tax payments. He also issued decrees on selecting guards and people to be in charge of them. This may not seem that unusual of a step, but one must remember that Ogodei was establishing a permanent base to store goods. Although nomadic societies have always acquired goods, they still had to move them around so that large quantities were rarely sought or kept for the long term. Ogodei realized that the amount of goods coming to the Mongol court had to be managed and organized, and thus he had to create a new branch of government in order to take care of it.

Ogodei also took steps to attract merchants to Karakorum through generosity. Much to the consternation of his officials, Ogodei repeatedly paid in excess for items that crossed his path. These included goods that were often of shoddy manufacture. Regardless of the quality, Ogodei paid top dollar. While some of his actions seemed foolish, his excessive spending brought international commerce to Karakorum. Once word spread of this practice, merchants were more than willing to go to Karakorum. Much of Mongolia had previously not been a major destination for the Silk Road traffic, but Ogodei changed that. The practices continued through the reign of Guyuk, but Mongke brought more moderation.

12 “pagan” temples, which could include Buddhist and Daoist shrines. William also noted two mosques and one church, belonging to Nestorian Christians.

Karakorum's significance declined after 1260, and it ceased to be the capital of the Mongol Empire. Although there were no signs that commercial activity declined at Karakorum, its position was no longer strategic. The empire had grown exponentially since Karakorum's founding, and it was no longer the center of the empire. After the dissolution of the Mongol Empire and after Khubilai became the khan of the empire, he moved the capital to Daidu, which was more centrally located for his purposes, but Karakorum remained the administrative center for Mongolia. Furthermore, Karakorum's vulnerability had been demonstrated in his civil war with Ariq Boke. With the move to Daidu, Karakorum lapsed in importance. After 1368 the Northern Yuan again elevated it as a capital, but it was eventually destroyed during civil wars between the Northern Yuan and the Oirat. Today the site is dominated by the Buddhist monastery of Erdene Zuu (established 1585), which used much of the ruins as building materials.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Daidu; Khubilai Becomes Khan; *Paiza; Individuals:* Guyuk; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Key Events:* William of Rubruck, Journey of; *Key Places:* Jin Empire

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Khubilai Becomes Khan (May 5, 1260)

Khubilai's ascension of the Mongol throne was not guaranteed. Although he is remembered in history as one of the most powerful rulers of all time, he owes much of this to Marco Polo, whose travel account also obscures many of the travails and shortcomings of Khubilai Khan.

The death of Mongke Khan on August 11, 1259, triggered the dissolution of the Mongol Empire, largely because a succession plan had not been made. Like with his predecessors, the door for civil war was left open through the Turko-Mongolian system of succession whereby all relatives had at least a claim to the throne, leaving his brothers Ariq Boke and Khubilai to vie for the throne. Ariq Boke was the regent in Mongolia, while Mongke led the campaign against the Song Empire. Khubilai also had a large army at his command in China.

Ariq Boke, who represented a more traditional Mongol Empire, garnered support within Mongolia as well as other steppe-based regions of the empire. Meanwhile, Khubilai learned of Ariq Boke's plans from his wife Chabi and also held his own *quriltai* in 1260. Some sources indicate that Ariq Boke was duplicitous and tried to lure Khubilai to Mongolia to attend the *quriltai*. Instead, Khubilai held his own in his domains in China in the spring of 1260. According to *Yuan shi*, a history of the Mongols compiled during the Ming dynasty, Khubilai refused to take the throne three times before he finally assented on May 5, 1260. Ariq Boke's position as the great khan occurred one month later in June, and thus two khans now ruled the empire, forcing others to take sides.

It is difficult to determine the true course of events. Did Ariq Boke elect himself and then try to trick Khubilai, or did Khubilai hold his own *quriltai* to ensure his own election? The latter is just as likely as the former, as Khubilai represented a change from the normal Mongol ruler. Khubilai sympathized with his subjects. He was familiar with Chinese culture, religion, and government and thus recognized a need to change some Mongol practices to accommodate the much larger Chinese population. At the same time, he never had any intentions of abandoning his Mongol heritage. Nonetheless, his prosedentary sympathies were enough to deter many conservative Mongols from embracing him as the khan. Thus, it is just as likely that he instigated the civil war to ensure his own claim to the throne—a claim that was not certain through a *quriltai*.

The fact that Berke of the Golden Horde, Alghu of the Chagatai Khanate, and most of the Toluids supported Ariq Boke suggests that Khubilai was the usurper to the throne. Khubilai's main supporters were Hulegu, who also ruled a vast sedentary population, and others who were serving in China. It seemed that Ariq Boke should win the war due to his support, but Khubilai had access to more resources, which gave him

more flexibility in meeting threats as well as attracting support from the less convinced Chinggisids and generals. He also mobilized the support of the Chinese under his control by linking himself to Confucian ideals. Khubilai sent a proclamation indicating that while the Mongols held military superiority, they needed to be guided and governed by the sagely wisdom of Confucians. This gained him the support of the intelligentsia, while reduction in taxes and distribution of food and money earned him the support of the populace.

As Karakorum survived only because of food shipments from beyond Mongolia, Khubilai stopped and then intercepted other supplies. One by one, the regions that supported Karakorum fell to Khubilai's forces: Gansu in the former Xi Xia, northern China, and then in Central Asia. The only region that Khubilai could not block was the Yenisei River Valley in Siberia. While it helped, it was insufficient for all of Ariq Boke's needs. Meanwhile, Khubilai's armies advanced on Karakorum while other fighting occurred in Central Asia and on other fronts. Their armies met on the slopes of the Khingan Mountains in eastern Mongolia in the autumn of 1261. Although the battle was a draw, the consequences for Ariq Boke were greater, as it did not drive Khubilai from Mongolia.

The situation for Ariq Boke declined further as Alghu proved to be an unreliable ally, preferring independence to subservience. While Ariq Boke defeated him and seized his headquarters in Almaliq, Alghu remained free. Ariq Boke's treatment of the Chagatai population only led to desertions to either Khubilai or Alghu, and his capture of Almaliq did not alleviate his lack of supplies. Harsh winters only exacerbated the issue. By 1264, Ariq Boke abandoned the Chagatai Khanate and surrendered to Khubilai in Shangdu.

Khubilai accepted his brother's submission and did not punish him initially. Eventually Khubilai was convinced to punish him, which only took place a year later, in 1265. Several of his supporters were purged. A *quriltai* was then convened to judge Ariq Boke and also confirm Khubilai as the great khan. The rulers of the Golden Horde, the Il-Khanate, and the Chagatai Khanate found excuses to decline (civil war being a major factor). In any case, Hulegu, Alghu, and Berke all died months apart, which also delayed events. This also opened the door for Khubilai to pass judgment, but the issue became moot when Ariq Boke died of an illness in early 1266. Thus, while Ariq Boke was dead and Khubilai was victor for the throne, the fact that he was never confirmed by all of the Chinggisid houses in a proper *quriltai* left his claim to the title with a taint of illegitimacy.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; *Paiza;* Shangdu; *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; *Individuals:* Chabi Khatun; Khubilai Khan; *Primary Documents:* Document 29; Document 36; Document 39

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Mongol Empire, Dissolution of (1260)

In 1259, there was little indication that the Mongol Empire could be halted militarily, much less that the empire was about to end. Under the leadership of Mongke Khan, the Mongols now had a unified and rationale bureaucracy to manage taxes and maintain order. The Mongol armies were juggernauts. Although they still possessed superior military skills, under Mongke Khan resources were organized, which also permitted the Mongols to simply roll over their opponents. The Mongol Empire was at the peak of its power, able to mobilize over 1 million troops just among its nomadic armies, and its wealth was unparalleled. The death of one man, however, caused its dissolution.

While campaigning against the Song Empire, Mongke died either from disease or an arrow wound—the sources are not in agreement. His death brought the empire to a halt and from which it never quite recovered. A new khan was dead, but the armies of the empire were dispersed in China and the Middle East. While Mongke's brothers, Hulegu, Khubilai, and Ariq Boke, considered themselves contenders for the thrones, there is no discussion of Mongke's offspring in this context.

Ariq Boke, who served as regent in Mongolia, convened a *quriltai* almost immediately. He did not wait for his brothers to return to Mongolia. Khubilai also held a *quriltai* of his own in China and became khan. Hulegu did not follow suit. He had been in the midst of invading Syria when the news arrived. He retired to the Mughan steppes in Azerbaijan to wait and see what would happen, fully expecting a true *quriltai* to be held. It did not occur. With two *quriltais* occurring in Mongolia and China, civil war erupted between Ariq Boke and Khubilai. The war also represented an identity crisis for the Mongols.

Ariq Boke's faction represented the conservative nomadic faction—those who sought to maintain strong Mongol prerogatives and privileges. In their view, the empire and its sedentary population were there to be exploited. Khubilai's party also sought to maintain Mongol prerogatives but differed in their views of the sedentary population. Khubilai recognized the value of the sedentary people and sought some accommodation that would benefit the empire.

The rest of the Mongol Empire lined up on either side. Hulegu, who ruled a region with a large sedentary population, sided with Khubilai. In the Jochid or Golden Horde territories, Berke theoretically sided with Ariq Boke, as the largest portion of his population were Kipchaks. More important, Berke viewed this as the perfect time to attack Hulegu. Berke and the other Jochids viewed the territories of Azerbaijan and much of Iran as their rightful territory. Mongke, however, assigned it to Hulegu. While Berke was not willing to challenge Mongke, with his death the door was open, and their war took place on both sides of the Caucasus Mountains.

In the Chagatai Khanate, both Ariq Boke and Khubilai sought to place their own candidate on the throne to secure lines of communication as well as the resources in the region. Inevitably, each candidate to the throne sought independence from his supporter. Alghu made this a reality. Yet, he not only vied for independence from Ariq Boke and Khubilai but also had to struggle against the scion of the Ogodeyid branch of the family, Qaidu. Their struggle was certainly not based on steppe versus sown but rather on dominance of the region, which Qaidu eventually won with considerable assistance from the Jochids.

All of the participants then took steps to strip their rivals of possessions or military troops. As Jochid forces had accompanied Hulegu to the Middle East, he arrested or killed their commanders. Other Jochid troops escaped and joined Jochids stationed in a *tamma* in Afghanistan. Ariq Boke confiscated Hulegu's camps in Mongolia; Khubilai refused to send Qaidu his rightful revenues from *inju* possessions in China. What is curious, however, is that after a few years an understanding occurred. Even as civil wars raged, eventually the Chinggisid princes ceased to confiscate or interfere with revenues belonging to another Chinggisid, at least to a lesser degree.

Khubilai Khan defeated Ariq Boke. Although Hulegu and his successors accepted him as the ruler of the Mongol Empire, in truth the empire had split into four separate khanates: the Great Khanate or Yuan Empire in East Asia, the Chagatayid (and Ogodeyid during Qaidu's lifetime) in Central Asia, the Il-Khanate in the Middle East, and the Golden Horde or Jochid Khanate in the Pontic and Caspian steppes. At most, other rulers gave him token recognition but ruled as they willed. Khubilai Khan for his part also did not force the issue but focused on conquering the Song Empire. Internal rebellions and the decades-long border war with Qaidu also prevented him from pushing his authority upon the rest.

The death of Mongke irrevocably fragmented the Mongol Empire, in part because the Toluid Revolution caused an instability within the empire. Despite all of Mongke's efforts to reform the empire, he failed in the most crucial area—securing a successor. This opened the door for civil war among his brothers. With the far-flung territories of the empire, it was impossible for either Ariq Boke or Khubilai to keep a lid on underlying tensions and rivalries while in the midst of conflict. As these tensions erupted, containment was no longer possible. While the empire did not end, it did begin to dissolve.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Khubilai Becomes Khan; *Quriltai;* *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; *Individuals:* Hulegu; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; *Key Events:* Toluid Revolution

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Nogai (d. 1299)

For the Jochid Khanate, the most influential man for the last quarter of the 13th century was not the khan but rather the general and kingmaker, Nogai. Nogai was a minor Jochid prince, probably born to a concubine and thus eliminating any claim to the throne. Excluded from power, he became a well-regarded commander in the 1260s. He led the invasion of the Il-Khanate in 1262 and 1266 and also led a campaign through Bulgaria and into the Byzantine Empire. He became Berke Khan's right-hand man, and by time of the khan's death, Nogai was practically autonomous.

Nogai remained a valued adviser and general during the reign of Mongke-Temur (r. 1267–1280), but Nogai's independence increased when a weaker ruler came to the throne. Tode-Mongke (r. 1280–1287) succeeded his brother, Mongke-Temur, but lacked his resolve. As with his predecessors, the wars against the Il-Khanate continued but without major successes. Nogai's experience, however, prevented the il-khan Abaqa from securing victory.

Tode-Mongke's failure as a ruler and his inability to make difficult decisions led him to abdicate under pressure from Nogai. Nogai replaced him with Tele Buqa (r. 1287–1290). Nogai essentially became the coruler through this arrangement. During this period Nogai's appanage was independent, with the Golden Horde Khan having no authority over his actions. Even subjects within the empire were confused over the identity of the true ruler. Many Russian princes believed that Nogai was the ruler. They may have simply recognized the reality of the situation. Nogai also dealt directly with the Genoese commercial cities in the Black Sea. Berke had permitted the Genoese to operate out of Kaffa (on the Crimean Peninsula) in 1266. During Nogai's ascendancy, they possessed almost unrestricted trading rights in the city and exerted an enormous amount of influence in the region, largely with Nogai's cooperation. The fact that Bulgaria dealt exclusively with Nogai only added to the reality. Furthermore, Nogai brought Serbia into the Mongol orbit, solidifying his image in Europe as the true ruler of the Golden Horde. In 1290 Tele Buqa finally asserted himself and attempted to organize support against Nogai. Unfortunately, Tele Buqa did not hide his intentions well enough. Nogai was not so brazen as to execute a Chinggisid prince. Instead, he turned Tele Buqa over to another Chinggisid whom he raised to the throne, Toqta, the son of Mongke Temur.

Toqta (r. 1290–1312) came to the throne at a young age and served as the dutiful puppet Nogai hoped for, allowing Nogai to continue his own actions, including the war against the Il-Khanate. Unfortunately for Nogai, Toqta proved to be much like his father—strong-willed and capable. As he grew older, Toqta steadily increased his independence and carefully acquired supporters to challenge Nogai. He married a Byzantine princess and forced Bulgaria to recognize his authority, not Nogai's. In 1297 Toqta initiated war against Nogai. For two years, Nogai and Toqta fought for control of Nogai's

appanage in the vicinity of the Don and Dnieper Rivers. Nogai's fortunes declined so much that even the Genoese, whom he had shown much favor, murdered his son Aqtaji in 1298. Although Nogai plundered many Italian settlements in Crimea, he did not evict the Genoese. It is not clear if this was because of Kaffa's fortifications or because he needed the monetary support against Toqta.

Regardless, it did not matter, as Toqta emerged victorious. Nogai and his sons were removed from power and executed. Toqta was now able to fully exert his authority as the ruler of the Golden Horde. In the aftermath of Nogai's defeat, many of his supporters fled from the Golden Horde. Some found refuge in the Balkans, while others found service in the Byzantine Empire. Others even escaped into Anatolia. Some scholars believe that the roots of the Ottoman Empire can be found among these refugees.

Nogai's power was unrivaled for over 40 years. He never ruled directly as khan due to the somewhat ironic situation of his birth. His grasp of politics, however, permitted him to wield true power. He realized that to rule directly might shake the Chinggisids of the Golden Horde out of their acquiescence to his handling of the government. Nonetheless, one can see his gradual increasing of power and authority over aspects of the government. Had Toqta not proved to have an independent streak, it is quite possible that Nogai may have established his own dynasty. After the breakup of the Golden Horde his influence remained, as a nomadic group identified itself as the Noghai Horde and remained influential in steppe affairs into the 1600s. As it happened, Nogai would not be the last kingmaker to dominate the Golden Horde, and he was clearly the influence for the rest, including Edigu.

Timothy May

EDIGU

After the defeat and destruction of Toqtmish's Golden Horde, Timur placed other Chinggisids on the throne in the Pontic and Caspian steppes. But due to their Chinggisid lineage, Timur could not be certain of their loyalty vis-à-vis his own non-Chinggisid heritage. As a result, he also promoted a non-Chinggisid named Edigu. Edigu, a descendant of Nogai, became a kingmaker and controlled the fate of several khans.

After Timur departed, Toqtamysh attempted to resume power. Edigu and his puppet khan, Timur Qutulugh, defeated Toqtamysh. Timur Qutulugh remained the ruler of the Golden Horde until 1400, when his son Shadibeg succeeded him, still under the tutelage of Edigu. Toqtamysh, who had found refuge among the Lithuanians, attempted to reclaim his throne but died in battle in 1406 against Shadibeg (r. 1400–1407) and Edigu.

With Toqtamysh out of the picture, Edigu's influence increased over Shadibeg and his successor, Pulad (1407–1412). In addition to maintaining order in the steppes, Edigu also ensured that the Russian principalities remained vassals. Like Nogai and Timur-i Leng himself, Edigu saw the need for maintaining the pretense of a Chinggisid on the throne, particularly against charismatic foes such as Toqtamysh. Nonetheless, Edigu's power had limits. Pulad's successor, Timur Khan (r. 1412–1415), killed Edigu. Such was Edigu's power and influence that his legend only grew among the nomads, and he became an important folk hero to later generations among the Nogai Tatars.

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; *Individuals:* Abaqa

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Northern Yuan (1368–1634)

In September 1368 before the Ming armies reached the Yuan capital of Daidu, the Mongol emperor Toghon-Temur and his retinues fled to Yingchang (near modern-day Shiliin Khot in Inner Mongolia). Toghon-Temur died at Yingchang in 1370 and was succeeded by his son Ayushiridara (r. 1370–1378), whose posthumous titles were Zhaozong and Biligtu. With the ascension of Ayushiridara, the Northern Yuan dynasty truly began.

Initially, the Northern Yuan dynasty retained the Chinese-style court system of the Yuan dynasty. For example, Chinese official titles, such as *taishi* (grand preceptor) and *chingsang* (grand councilor), remained in place, and a state seal was still issued by the Ministry of the Rite of the Central Secretariat in 1379. Ayushiridara and his younger brother and successor Toghus-Temur (r. 1378–1388), whose posthumous title was Uskhal, both adopted Chinese reign titles—Xuanguang and Tianyuan, respectively.

The Northern Yuan claim on the Chinese throne was never realized because of military setbacks. Ayushiridara ignored the Ming dynasty's terms of peace and raided Ming

DAYAN DIVIDES HIS EMPIRE

Replacing the *taishi* system, Dayan Khan divided his territory into six *tumed* (10,000), including three West Tumens (Ordos, Tumed, Yungshiyebu) headed by a *jinong* (vice-regent) and three East Tumens (Chakhar, Khalkha, and Uriyangkhai). All six *tumed* were governed by Dayan Khan's own sons under the title of *taiji*. The title of khan was supposed to be conferred to the *taiji* of Chakhar, but the great khans later had only a symbolic influence over the other *tumed*. Even the title of khan could not be monopolized by the great khans. For example, Daraisun Kudeng Khan (1548–1557) had to grant his powerful cousin Altan (1508–1582) of Tumed the title of khan. This decentralization of power structure created by Dayan Khan continued until the end of the dynasty. The Chinggisid cults established in Ordos helped provide a religio-cultural base for this decentralized political formation.

borders. Ming forces, however, were able to defeat the allies of the Northern Yuan in Inner Mongolia. In 1388, the Ming army crushed the Mongol cavalry near Buir Lake. In the winter of 1388–1389, Toghus-Temur was murdered by Yisuder, a descendant of Ariq Boke. After that, the Ming–Northern Yuan military conflict temporarily ended because both sides were occupied with internal power struggles and usurpations. Although Chinese historians denied their legitimacy, the Northern Yuan emperors continued Chinggisid rule. However, they were sometimes only nominal rulers in Mongolia.

Besides the external threat of the Ming dynasty, the Northern Yuan also suffered from the internal instability caused by Mongol–Oirat rivalry. The Oirat had intermarried with the Mongol great khans, being marriage allies (*quda*) of the Mongols since Chinggis Khan's time. Under the Northern Yuan, the Oirat leaders were often given the title of *taishi* and ruled in the name of the Northern Yuan emperor.

Due to inconsistency in the historical record, the succession order of the early Northern Yuan khans is still open to question. After Yisuder killed Toghus-Temur, different lineages of the Chinggisids with different Oirat patrons competed for the throne. Successive Oirat chiefs, including Mongke-Temur (fl. 1400), Mahmud (d. 1417), Taiping (d. 1426), and Batu-Bolod, supported the descendants of Ariq Boke. Often the Oirat leaders controlled the Northern Yuan court and ruled in the name of the emperor. Their power was challenged by Arugtai (d. 1434) of the Asud, who supported the Ogodeids in the eastern guards of Hulun Buir. Guilichi of the Ogodeids, who was murdered in 1408, was enthroned by Arugtai as the new Mongol khan in 1400. However, Arugtai later murdered Guilichi and instead installed Bunyashir from Samarkand (r. 1408–1412), whose later title was Oljeitu, as his new puppet khan.

The Ming intervention in Mongolia during the reign of Ming emperor Yongle (r. 1402–1424) aggravated the Mongol–Oirat rivalry and contributed to the instability of the Northern Yuan Empire. In 1412 Bunyashiri was killed by Mahmud, an Oirat, who then enthroned Dalbag (r. 1412–1414) of the Ariq-Bokids. With Yongle's assistance, Arugtai defeated Mahmud in 1414 and enthroned Adai (r. 1426–1438), another member of the Ogodeids. Arugtai remained powerful at the Northern Yuan court until he was killed by Toghoon, son of Mahmud, in 1434. Shortly after killing Adai, the khan enthroned by Arugtai, in 1438, Toghoon died. Toghoon's son and successor, Esen Tai-shi (r. 1438–1454), continued his father's conquests in Manchuria and Moghulistan. Capturing the Ming Zhengtong emperor in 1449 was the zenith of Esen's military success. In 1452, Esen usurped the khanship and became the first non-Chinggisid khan of the Northern Yuan dynasty. His domination was short-lived, because his violation of the principle of Chinggisid rule instigated a backlash against his own rule. He was ultimately overthrown by Alag, his own *chingsang* of the right. The Oirat influence on the Northern Yuan court faded away with Esen's death. Thereafter, Northern Yuan political power was controlled by *taishis* of the Kharachin and the Uyghurs until 1481.

In 1480, Batu-Mongke Dayan Khan (r. 1480–1517) revived Chinggisid supremacy in the Northern Yuan court with the assistance of Mandukhai Sechen Khatun (fl. 1473–1501), the widow and regent of the previous great khan Manduul (d. ca. 1479). Through his title Dayan (Great Yuan), he restored the claim to the Yuan dynasty. Once secure

THE SECOND CONVERSION TO BUDDHISM

In spite of the symbolic supreme status of Mongol great khans, Altan Khan of the Tumed played a more active role in the Northern Yuan regime during the 16th century. He chased the Oirat in the northwest to Karakorum and in the south made peace with the Ming dynasty and forced the latter to open border markets in 1571. He recruited a large number of Han refugees and built a new capital, Guihua (today's Hohhot), which became the commercial and cultural center of Mongolia. He also restored Buddhism in Mongolia by inviting Sonam Gyatso (1543–1588) of the Gelugpa sect from Lhasa and bestowed the title “Dalai Lama” on him.

During the second half of the 16th century, the revival of Buddhism was of momentous religious and cultural significance in the Northern Yuan dynasty. After the Yuan court retreated back to Mongolia, the principle of the “two customs” (*khoyar yosu*, Buddhist lamas and their secular state patrons) had lost its significance in Mongolian politics and history. By the time of the Second Conversion (1566–1650), Buddhism was restored to be the state religion of Mongols. Tumen Jasagtu Khan (b. 1539, r. 1558–1592) of Chakhar supported the Karma-pa sect. Altan Khan of Tumed in the Three Western Tumens accepted the dGe-lugs-pa sect from 1575. In 1585–1586 Abatai Khan of northern Khalkha also converted to the dGe-lugs-pa sect. Hereafter the restoration of Buddhism resumed a profound influence on Mongolian society, literature, and historiography.

in his position, Dayan Khan abolished the *taishi* system and all the Yuan official titles in 1510. He also divided his empire among his sons to secure control against non-Chinggisids. His successors, however, lacked his dynamism, and despite the appearance of an occasional powerful great khan, the Northern Yuan dynasty gradually fragmented.

The collapse of the Northern Yuan dynasty resulted from external threats and successive internal upheavals. In the 17th century, Nurhachi (r. 1616–1626) united the Manchus in southern Manchuria. In 1607, Enggeder Taiji of the Khalkha of the Five Otons presented Nurhachi with the title of Kundulen Khan. Between 1612 and 1615, Nurhachi made marriage alliances with the Khorchin and Jarud princes in eastern Inner Mongolia, and in 1624 the southern Khalkhas and Khorchin joined the Manchus. Facing this external challenge, the great khan Ligdan (r. 1604–1634) attempted to unite the Mongols by force to resist the Manchu encroachment. However, his military operation only instigated opposition from other Mongols. In 1632, Ligdan Khan was defeated by the army of Hung Taiji, Nurhachi's son and successor, and fled to Kokenuur, where he died in 1634. The Northern Yuan dynasty officially ended in 1635 when Ligdan's sons submitted to the Manchus.

Wei-chieh Tsai

See also: *Government and Politics:* Titles; Toghon Temur; *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; Yuan Society; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Alans; Oirat

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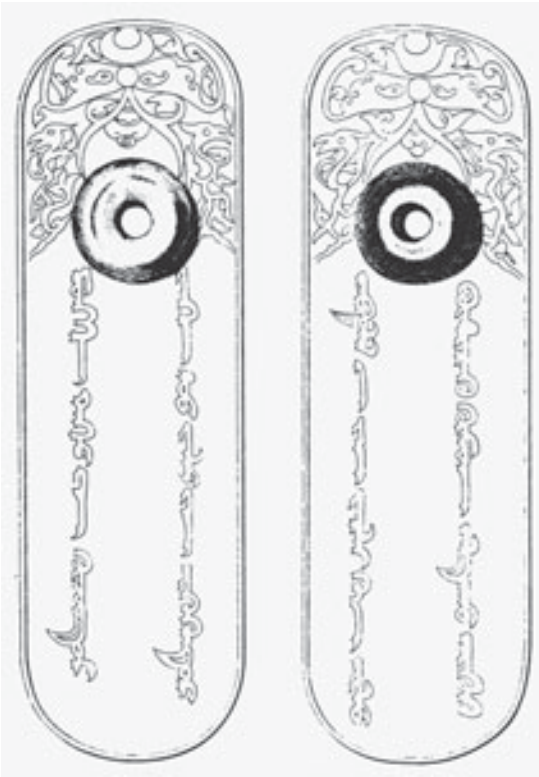
Paiza

Paiza, derived from the Chinese word *paizi*, was known as the *gerege* in Mongolian. The *paiza* permitted its bearer to demand service from *yam* stations as well as goods and service from the general population. The use of the *paiza* was not a Mongol innovation but rather adoption of a preexisting system used during the Tang, Liao, and Jin Empires.

The Mongols copied the Jin tablets, which connoted status and privileges. The tablets indicated different levels of authority based on their appearance or material in the following order: golden tiger, gilded silver, silver, and wooden. The golden tiger was round with a tiger's head. Western observers sometimes recorded this as a lion, as they were unfamiliar with tigers. The gilded silver and silver were a rounded rectangle with a hole for a thong to attach it to the bearer's belt or neck. Additionally, the bearer received a written *yarliq* (decree), which instructed them on the privileges they were entitled to, their responsibilities, and why they received the *paiza*. The recipient, however, only needed to carry the *paiza*, thus permitting the less scrupulous to abuse their privileges.

The inscription on the *paiza*, written in the Uyghur script, varied through time but gave some approximation of "By the power of eternal heaven, by decree of the khan, whoever does not venerate this decree shall be executed." Often the name of the khan was included on the *paiza*. During the Yuan Empire, the *paiza* was issued in Phags-pa script.

While the *paiza* is most commonly associated with granting the bearer access to the *yam* stations, it also served as a badge of office. Besides the messengers and *elchis* (envoys), the *paizas* were given to military commanders, *daruqachis*, local rulers, *ortoq* merchants, and even clergy members who were held in esteem by the Mongol court. It was also inheritable. The *paiza* granted the bearer incredible authority over the civilian populace. The sheer number of *paizas* issued caused considerable strain on the empire, which was further exacerbated because the imperial court was not the sole distributor of *paizas*. Every Mongol prince could hypothetically issue his own *paizas*. These did not necessarily have the same authority as the imperial *paizas*, but a peasant village was unlikely to argue with a henchman of a Chinggisid prince accompanied by an armed retinue. Additionally, the wide distribution caused turf wars within the government.



The *paiza* or *gerege* was a passport that allowed travelers access to the *yam* system. This one, using the vertical Uyghur script, originates from the territory of the former Golden Horde and was found in 1845. (Marco Polo, Henry Rule (translator), *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian*, 1874)

prohibited *ortoqs* from using them, thus restricting the *yam* and the *paiza* to government use only. Considering the impact of the Toluid Revolution in terms of eliminating opposition, it is likely that it had a huge impact, but difficulties still remained, as change did not occur overnight.

Military commanders vied with civil administrators over access to resources; local rulers also contended with the privileges of Mongol officials. While violence was possible, abuse of locals through pillaging or excessive tax demands was inevitable.

The Mongol Khans did recognize the problem and took steps to curb the exploitation. During Ogodei's reign, he prohibited the use of nonimperial-issued *paizas*. Unfortunately, during the reign of Toregene this policy was reversed in her efforts to curry the favor of the Chinggisid nobility. Guyuk also recalled and reissued *paizas*, but this had limited effect due not only to his short reign but to the fact that the *paizas* were difficult to confiscate because of their wide distribution and the sheer size of the empire.

Mongke proved to be the most effective in curbing the use and abuse of the *paiza*. Not only did he prohibit the nobility from issuing *paizas*, but he also recalled the old ones and issued new ones. He also

PAIZA AND MILITARY RANK

Military commanders received *paizas* based on rank. Commanders of 10 received silver *paizas* while commanders of 1,000 received the gilded silver *paiza*. A commander of a *tumen*, or 10,000, carried a golden tiger tablet. During Khubilai Khan's reign, there were commanders of 100,000 who received a *paiza* of gold engraved with tigers, falcons, the sun, and the moon. While it is not recorded in the sources, it is likely that commanders of 10 soldiers received a wooden *paiza*.

Paizas continued in use after the dissolution of the empire. Issuing them with the ruler's name did assist in controlling distribution, as was done in the Golden Horde. Khubilai Khan instituted additional reforms in the Yuan Empire. In addition to using the Phags-pa script on the *paizas*, he instituted additional *paiza* forms by issuing the *altan bars* or golden tiger *paiza* into three ranks and also issuing a gyrfalcon *paiza*, which was issued to only military officers. Circular bronze *paizas* were also used. In the Il-Khanate, Ghazan Khan instituted widespread reforms by canceling all previous *paizas* and issuing new ones only when the old ones were turned over. These new *paizas* sensibly included the name of the bearer, thus preventing theft or the *paiza* being inherited or transferred. As such, authority remained in the hands of the Mongol government.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Toregene Khatun; *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; Writing Systems; *Yam;* Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Guyuk; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Ortoq

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Quriltai

The *quriltai* was a council of notables, made up by the most influential and powerful figures in the Mongol Empire. The *quriltai* discussed state policy, distributed rewards and offices, celebrated religious and cultural festivals, investigated crimes, and even nominated khans. The *quriltai* was usually summoned at least once a year during the spring, when the snow had thawed and travel throughout the empire was possible. Chinggis Khan insisted on meeting with his leading commanders at least twice a year to instruct them in their duties. Prior to the dissolution of the Mongol Empire into four separate khanates, *quriltais* were held in Mongolia, at the confluence of the Onon and Kerulen Rivers. But with the fragmentation of the empire, rival leaders held their own gatherings at various pastures and settlements throughout Eurasia.

The *quriltai* is most often described as a meeting between the *aqqa* (elder) and *ini* (junior) members of the realm to discuss matters relating to the state. It was previously believed that this characterization referred simply to the elder and junior members of the Chinggisid royal family, known as the *altan uruq*, but more recently it has been

suggested that the term implied the entire Mongol polity: the old and young, the weak and strong, the wealthy and poor. Indeed, the various accounts we have of the *quriltai* meetings state that they were attended by not only the senior Chinggisid princes but also Mongol queens, princesses, royal sons-in-law (*guregen*), senior commanders, administrators, foreign envoys, and vassal rulers. These magnates each brought a small contingent of followers and servants to tend to their needs during their stay at the *quriltai*, which swelled the number attending to as many as 12,000 people.

Perhaps the most celebrated and controversial function of the *quriltai* was to nominate a new ruler after the death of a khan. The first ruler to be appointed by the council was Chinggis Khan's successor, Ogodei (1229–1241), in 1228. During his *quriltai* and that of his heir Guyuk (r. 1246–1247), those attending considered the will of the previous ruler, the ability of the candidates, and their own personal interests when deciding who to nominate as khan. Once a decision had been reached, the three most senior princes and commanders would physically raise the khan onto the throne, at which point all those present would doff their caps, sling their belts over their shoulders, and bow nine times to pledge their allegiance. Senior dignitaries were also obliged to sign their names, affirming their commitment to the new ruler in a ceremony known as *mochalga*. The newly elected khan would then reward those who nominated him to the throne with generous endowments from the royal treasury and with military and administrative offices throughout the empire. It was also traditional for the incoming khan to confirm the laws and edicts (*jasaq*) of his predecessors, thereby affirming the existing order of the realm.

The fact that consultative bodies also played an important role in the administration of earlier steppe empires, such as the Xiongnu, Great Turk, and Khitan Empires, has led many historians to the conclusion that nomadic societies were inherently democratic. It has been argued that the mobility of the nomads allowed them to move away from a government if it mistreated them, and so khans were obliged to consult with their subjects regularly to ensure that they maintained power. More recently, however, the elective function of the *quriltai* has been downplayed by historians, who point out that the choice of ruler was usually agreed to in a series of deals, conflicts, and alliances prior to the *quriltai*, which only provided the ceremonial confirmation of the most powerful candidate. There can be little doubt that many *quriltais*, particularly those held after 1264, did confirm decisions reached through prior politicking, yet this did not deprive the gatherings of their symbolic significance. The *quriltais* played an important constitutive role, defining the relationship between a khan and his subjects.

Quriltais were also summoned to outline strategies and policies for the coming year. In addition to nominating Ogodei to the throne of the empire, the *quriltai* of 1228 also agreed upon invading the Jin Empire in northern China. The invasion began in 1231, and when the conquest was finally completed in 1234 a new *quriltai* was summoned to distribute the plunder and discuss how to reallocate the soldiers and resources deployed in northern China. The 1234 *quriltai* not only decided upon a new campaign against the Pontic steppe and Eastern Europe but also determined which generals and princes should assume command of the campaign, how many soldiers should be allocated to the invading army, and how they were going to be provisioned. Ogodei himself was initially eager to join the march west but was informed by his nephew, Mongke,

that his services would not be needed and decided to remain at home in Mongolia. The *quriltai* therefore performed a vital function in directing the military and administrative policy of the fledgling Mongol Empire.

The constitutional and consultative roles of the *quriltai* declined in the years after the fragmentation of the Mongol Empire in 1264. The emergence of civil bureaucracies and stable tax systems across the empire caused the khans to rely more heavily on their sedentary population than their nomadic military elite. This meant that the khan no longer needed to cultivate the favor of his nomadic aristocracy to support his policies. As the state began to assume a more autocratic and impersonal character, the *quriltai* performed an increasingly ceremonial function in legitimating the khan's power.

Michael Hope

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Guyuk; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Key Events:* *Quriltai* of 1206; *Key Places:* Jin Empire

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Sarai

As Batu established his rule in the Kipchak steppes, he built a city, Sarai (Saray), in the vicinity of the lower Volga River to serve as his administrative capital even while he remained nomadic. The city was located along the Akhtuba River, which runs parallel to the Volga River approximately 62 miles (100 kilometers) north of Astrakhan, the center of a successor state to the Golden Horde.

Situated on a hill that overlooked the Akhtuba River, the town was somewhat reminiscent of the Scythian towns built in the same region. As the city was 45 feet (13–14 meters) above the river, it was largely protected from flooding while still having access to a water source. As an urban center it was relatively small and extended for 2 to 2.5 square miles, but it served the purposes of the Golden Horde. The khans of the Golden Horde rarely lived in the city, preferring to nomadize around it during the winter and then move to pastures deeper in the steppes during the summer.

Archaeology reveals that the city had a wide array of structures, from basic structures to palatial estates and manors that had tiled floors and walls. As with Karakorum, evidence suggests that some yurts were also kept, as was the habit of the nomad elite, in what are believed to be the yards or gardens of the wealthy homes. Evidence also suggests that homes became increasingly complex over time.

When John of Plano Carpini and William of Rubruck passed through the region, Sarai was a fledgling town that they did not visit. Instead, they only saw Batu's *ordo* (camp). By the early 14th century, however, Sarai had grown to a respectable size according to Ibn Battuta, who reported seeing 13 mosques. The city also had paved streets, caravansaries, madrassas, and other palaces indicating that Sarai possessed a high culture and was not simply an administrative center. The city itself had separate sections for the major ethnic groups who dwelled within it: Mongols, Alans, Kipchaks, and Russians all had their own markets and neighborhoods that attended to their needs. While Islam became the dominant religion, Sarai also boasted an orthodox metropolitan bishop. Commercial activity flourished and led to the establishment of separate districts for foreign merchants, including those coming to the Italian maritime cities such as Venice and Genoa as well as merchants from the Mamluk Sultanate. Armenian and Persian merchants from the Il-Khanate also established successful businesses within Sarai, despite the fact that the Golden Horde and the Il-Khanate were frequently at war. The volume of trade through the region is what permitted the city to thrive.

Sarai was well situated as part of a caravan route that went from the Black Sea to Sarai to Urgench across the Caspian Sea and then into Central Asia. A southern route also continued to Tabriz and points in the Middle East. Sea-lanes from the Black Sea connected it the Mamluk Sultanate in Cairo as well as Genoa and Venice in Italy. The connection with Cairo was politically important, as the Golden Horde and Mamluk Sultanate were allies. It appears that Berke modeled much of the palace structure in Sarai off of the Mamluk example in an effort to make his state appear more Islamic.

NEW SARAI

New Sarai, or Sarai al-Jadid, was built in 1332 and became the capital of the Golden Horde in 1341. It remained the imperial center until Timur-i Leng sacked it in 1395. According to legend, it was a city built by Batu's brother, Berke, and was sometimes called Sarai Berke. This is found in the writings of Ibn Battuta. This is erroneous, however, as Berke held court in Sarai proper. Nonetheless, because of the confusion it is sometimes difficult to determine what city 14th-century travelers are describing. New Sarai may have had an alternative name, Sara Baraka or Sarai the Blessed. The Arabic word *baraka* may have been transformed into Berke, thus giving rise to the legend.

At its peak, one could spend the entire morning walking the length of the city but half that for the width. A wall enclosed approximately 0.6 square miles (1.6 square kilometers), or 162 acres. Its overall area of urban settlement, however, was extensive. Archaeologists estimate that it consisted of an area of 20 square miles (102 square kilometers) and a population of at least 10,000 and maybe twice that. Like Sarai before it, New Sarai boasted a polyglot population including not only Mongols and Kipchaks but also Circassians, Alans, Greeks, and Russians. Arab merchants from various parts of the Middle East (including the Il-Khanate) also frequented the city. The city itself was located north of Sarai, approximately 40 miles (85 kilometers) from Volgograd in the vicinity of the modern-day city of Kolobovka and 162 miles (260 kilometers) north of Sarai.

Unlike New Sarai, Sarai survived the depredations of Timur-i Leng. It continued to exist into the late 15th century. Sarai's demise came with its capture by the Crimean Tatars, themselves an offshoot of the Golden Horde. With its capture and the resulting destruction, Sarai gradually faded into obscurity.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Ordo;* *Individuals:* Batu; Ibn Battuta; Jochi; Timur-i Leng; *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; Mamluks; *Key Places:* Kipchak Steppes; Mamluk Sultanate

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Shamanism

Prior to the mass conversion to Buddhism in the 16th century, the Mongols were primarily shamanistic. Although Nestorian Christians, Buddhists, and even Muslims could be found in medieval Mongolia, it was mainly among the upper levels of social status and not among the common people. The vast majority of people in Mongolia, however, subscribed to shamanism.

As a very broad-based belief system, Mongolian shamanism has its own peculiar aspects, which makes it distinct from shamanism elsewhere in Northeast Asia. The worldview of Mongolian shamanism was very similar to that of the mundane world—the afterlife was identical to the present. Upon death, one was usually buried with his or her possessions, including animals, so the deceased could have them in the afterlife. Just as in the mundane, the transcendent world (afterlife) possessed a hierarchy. Thus, if one was a khan or prince in the mundane world, he retained his status in the afterlife.

The spirit world interacted with the mundane world. Spirits, however, were generally viewed as neither good nor evil. They were neutral to the mundane world and usually ancestors. Over all of this a supreme being reigned, the Koke Mongke Tenggeri (Blue Eternal Sky). *Tenggeri* translates from Mongolian as “heaven,” “sky,” or “god.” There were other *tenggeris* and powerful spirit beings, but the Koke Mongke Tenggeri resided as the chief spiritual being. An Earth goddess also existed, known as Etuken.

Although the spirit world was neutral toward the living, if one transgressed against a spirit, the spirit took action. Therefore, an individual was necessary to communicate with the spirits and act as an intermediary between the spirit world and the mundane. This individual was the shaman (*boge*) or shamaness (*idughan*). In addition to their roles as intermediaries with the spirit world, shamans also acted as doctors for both physical and spiritual ailments. Furthermore, they played important roles in communal gatherings.

One such gathering was known as the *tailaghan*. It was regularly performed and represented the family, clan, and tribe. The *tailaghan* took place over several days and involved the sacrifice of many animals and alcohol to the spirits. Usually, the *tailaghan* occurred twice a year. During the *tailaghan*, the shaman ensured that the ritual was correct. The *boge* or *idughan* worked with the clan elders to sacrifice auspicious animals to the spirits and ensure that prayers reached the appropriate spirit.

An important role was to retrieve lost souls from the spirit world. This occurred during illness, injury, or spiritual kidnapping. Although the shamanistic Mongols lacked an overarching concept for the soul, the soul appeared in three basic forms. The first was the bone *hunehun*, which, as the name implies resided in the bone. The second soul was the flesh *hunehun*, which resides in the flesh or blood. The final soul is the *sulde*, or shadow/ghost.

Souls were not necessarily immortal among the Mongols, as souls could perish. The flesh *hunehun* passed away with the decomposition of the body, which took approximately three years. The bone *hunehun* could live on, as it only died when the pelvic bone, in which it resided, was shattered. The bone *hunehun* could become vengeful and cause nightmares for disrespectful people but remained in the vicinity of the body.

When one became ill, the Mongols believed that the soul had wandered from the body. The only way to cure the individual was to have a shaman retrieve the soul before it reached Erlik Khan, or the God of Death. The shaman would first have the tent made attractive to the soul by placing in the open personal possessions of the patient and gathering his or her friends. The patient was also dressed in his or her best clothes, and lights were placed so the soul could find its way back. The shaman then requested the assistance of *zayans* and *ezens*.

Zayans were a special set of spirits of someone who was fated to a terrible death. These include suicide, a child's death, or an emotional death. These spirits can be very cruel, as they were filled with suffering and frustration. However, if the shaman controlled them, they assisted in locating the lost soul. The *udkha*, the spirit of the shaman's family also assisted the shaman. The *ezens* were powerful spirit lords.

The spirits mirrored the hierarchy of the social order. There are khan spirits, *ezen* spirits, etc. The spirit ecology grew or shrank according to the size of the region. Thus, during the Mongol Empire, Chinggis Khan's *sulde* had a tremendous amount of power, and the Mongol spirit world was vast.

A final spirit was the *chinar*, which is the spirit of individual shamans. It could also be a structure such as an *oboo*. Although the *chinar* was a useful spirit, it could also be transformed into the *chidkur*. Children attracted the *chidkur*, a dangerous spirit often blamed for children's deaths, as it preyed upon children and stole their souls. Among

SPECIALIST SHAMANS

In addition to the shaman, there were several specialists. The *dallachi* was a *scapulamancer*, or one who could tell the future by examining the cracks in burnt sheep bones. Another diviner was the *togelechi*, who worked with a variety of objects such as coins and arrows. The *domchi* is thought to be a sorcerer or healer, perhaps even a traditional shaman. Another healer or doctor was the *emchi*. A final specialist who appeared frequently in medieval sources was the *yadchi*, who possessed the ability to summon rain or hailstorms through the use of special stones.

the Mongols, it was believed that children's souls were not firmly set until they were four years old. Prior to this age, a *chidkur* could easily steal it.

The soul retrieval was a difficult process. Every time the shaman encountered a spirit or being who assisted him, he would have to pay them in money or other items, often provided by the family, making the process expensive. The rite to find the soul that has not wandered far was known as the *sasalga* (sprinkling) rite. The shaman sprinkled wine or kumiss (fermented mare's milk) toward the smoke hole of the tent while ringing a bell or cracking a whip. Then the patient also drank a bowl of the same drink. The ceremony ended after the soul was restored.

Although the Mongols converted to Buddhism in the east and Islam in the west, shamanic rites never completely disappeared, even with persecution. Nonetheless, shamans did lose their role as advisers and gradually lost influence within the Mongol Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Groups and Organizations:* Nestorian Christians; *Objects and Artifacts:* Ong-gon; *Tenggeri;* *Primary Documents:* Document 38

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Shangdu

Also known as Shang-tu, K'ai-ping, or Kaiping, the city of Shangdu served as Khubilai Khan's summer residence and capital, with Daidu being his primary capital. Westerners

are most familiar with Shangdu from Samuel Taylor Coleridge's opium-inspired dream poem *Xanadu*.

The city was initially built as Kaiping in 1256 during the reign of Mongke Khan near modern-day Zhenglan Qi in the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region of modern-day China, located approximately 275 miles (444 kilometers) north of modern-day Beijing (medieval Daidu). It was in Khubilai's patrimony and, built on his orders, served as his military headquarters. After Mongke's death, after hearing that his brother Ariq Boke held a *quriltai* and was named khan in Mongolia, Khubilai held his own *quriltai* at Kaiping, which named him khan.

During the civil war with Ariq Boke, Kaiping's location served Khubilai quite well, with its proximity to Mongolia and Manchuria (where Ariq Boke had allies). Furthermore, it was also close to Yanjing (located in modern-day Beijing), which served as a major supply depot for Khubilai's army.

Situated with mountain views on all sides with ample water, fauna, and flora, the location of Shangdu was picturesque, to say the least. The city's layout and architecture displayed both Chinese and Mongolian influences. The city itself was planned by Liu Bingzhong (1216–1274) based on geomancy and consisted of three primary sections, all rectangular. Approximately 200,000 people lived in the city, making it considerably larger than Karakorum. The largest section, consisting of 2,200 square meters (7,200 square feet), was the outer city. Six gates, located with two each on the east and west walls and then one on each of the northern and southern walls, gave access to the city. Ordinary citizens dwelled here and in the suburbs. The imperial city was the next largest and, accessible only to government officials, was connected to the outer city in the southwest. The imperial city included the residences of Khubilai and his court. A brick wall separated the imperial city from the outer city.

Just north of the imperial city's center, and again separated by an earthen wall and a moat, was the smaller park area where Khubilai Khan kept his "stately pleasure dome." This construction appears to have been a collapsible palace made of cane (or perhaps a giant yurt). Four gates gave access to the park. Here was also another enclosed area that was Khubilai Khan's private hunting park and contained meadows, forests, small lakes, and streams that provided life for a variety of animals. While Khubilai hunted in the park, particularly with falcons, the park also kept other animals, including white mares that provided the milk for the Mongol khan's kumiss.

The city's name changed from Kaiping to Shangdu (Upper Town or Upper Capital) in 1263. The name change reflected the move of the Mongolian capital from Karakorum. Shangdu was south of Mongolia but was located in northern China and north of Yanjing and Zhongdu, capitals of previous dynasties. Although Khubilai Khan had captured Karakorum from Ariq Boke, he realized that the city did not serve his needs and remained vulnerable to attack from Qaidu. Yanjing eventually replaced Shangdu as the capital of Khubilai's empire when it was renamed Dadu (Great Capital) or Daidu in Mongolian in 1272. Shangdu, however, remained important due to its location. Although relatively near to Dadu, its more northern location meant that it was cooler and served as a useful escape for Khubilai and his court during the summer months. Here he could hunt in his park and in the steppes while also holding court and attending the necessary rituals.

Shangdu also remained important after Khubilai's death. All of the Yuan emperors were selected at *quriltai*s held at Shangdu, following Khubilai's example. It also provided welcome relief from the hotter and more humid summers of Daidu and other sections of China. Indeed, Shangdu gained some sacral and political significance in terms of providing legitimacy to the ruler. As such, it also became a target during the wave of rebellions, including the Red Turban Rebellion that rocked the empire in its last decades. Rebels burned Shangdu during the winter of 1358–1359 when the khan and his army were absent, so it was less defended. After the establishment of the Ming Empire, the Ming garrisoned it to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Northern Yuan, but the city was eventually abandoned completely by both sides in 1430.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Khubilai Becomes Khan; Northern Yuan; *Quriltai; Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Objects and Artifacts:* Kumiss; *Primary Documents:* Document 39

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Sultaniyya

The town of Sultaniyya was erected by the eighth il-khan, Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), at the beginning of the 14th century. The ruins of the town are situated in the province of Zanjan in Iran, approximately 150 miles to the northwest of Tehran. The site was initially called Qunqur Alang by the Mongols and was first chosen for development by Oljeitu's father, Arghun Khan (r. 1284–1291), who began work on a wall 12,000 paces in circumference to surround the town. Arghun died in 1291 before construction was completed, and his plans remained dormant until Oljeitu came to the throne in 1304. In the following year, Oljeitu began work on expanding the walls built by his father and establishing the town as his new summer capital. The Mamluk historian al-'Ayni states that Oljeitu was out hunting when he stumbled upon the site of Qunqur Alang and decided to build a residence there due to the region's fine game and verdant pastures. Added to these considerations, no doubt, was the fact that Oljeitu wanted to consolidate his rule over the Il-Khanate through a grand gesture of royal benevolence. Indeed, the Persian tax official and historian Hamd Allah Mustawfi Qazwini claimed that the

city was named Sultaniyya because Oljeitu was the first il-khan to use the title “sultan.”

Oljeitu entrusted the construction of Sultaniyya to his vizier, Taj al-Din ‘Alishah, who ensured that it embodied the sultan’s love of opulence and grandeur. Oljeitu’s biographer, Abu al-Qasim Qashani, claimed that Sultaniyya was Oljeitu’s greatest legacy and that it became a destination for pilgrims. At the heart of the town stood a magnificent castle, the rooms of which were painted in silver and gold and covered with precious rubies and jewels. Elsewhere, the architecture of the town borrowed from Iran’s pre-Islamic past. Outside the castle there was a town square that bore huge *iwans* resembling those of the Sasanian *iwān* of Mada’in, and the castle walls were decorated with a lion standing in front of the sun, the traditional symbol of Iranian kingship. Sultaniyya was an expression of the Persian, Islamic, and imperial Mongolian traditions of political authority, which the il-khans had come to embody.

Sultaniyya was described as a productive and lively center of culture, with learning and trade during the first half of the 14th century. The town served as the summer residence of the il-khan court, which during the reign of Oljeitu spent an average of 150 days per year residing there. The presence of the court caused merchants, craftsmen, petitioners, spiritual leaders, and scholars to flock to Sultaniyya in the hope of royal patronage. Even the outlying towns, such as Sarjahan, had grown prosperous due to



The tomb of Oljeitu (r. 1305–1306) in Sultaniyya, present-day Iran. Oljeitu established Sultaniyya as his capital. His tomb is one of the few remaining il-khan buildings. (Roger Wood/Corbis)

their proximity to the court. Yet the size and wealth of the town fluctuated with the migrations of the ruler. If the il-khan was in residence, the town's revenues would climb to around 300,000 dinars per annum, but this number would drop to 200,000 dinars in his absence.

Oljeitu and his heir Abu Said Bahadur Khan ensured that the town was linked into the existing road networks of Iran. One of the most important roads was that leading from Sultaniyya to Hamadan, which functioned as the main terminus for the old Seljuk network, thereby linking Sultaniyya to the rest of the country. Other roads led to Azerbaijan, the Caucasus, Anatolia, and Iraq. Yet the roads were only one of the amenities afforded to the new imperial capital. Oljeitu's senior commanders and statesmen competed with each other to beautify and expand Sultaniyya in the hope of winning their sovereign's favor. Oljeitu's chief minister, Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah, was said to have erected over 1,000 homes in the new city as well as two great minarets, a school of medicine, and a Sufi monastery (*khanaqah*). This thriving metropolis attracted settlers from all over the world, creating a multicultural atmosphere that led, some stated, to a single language that did not dominate; rather, all spoke a mixed dialect of Persian. The town was even given its own archbishop in 1318, when Pope John XXII ordered work to begin on a church and invited Abu Said to convert to Christianity.

Sultaniyya survived the fall of the il-khans and remained an important political center for another century. Control of the il-khans' summer residence was seen as a critical component of any claim to authority over Iran after 1335. In 1381 the city fell to the armies of Amir Timur, who granted it to his son Amiranshah to rule along with the rest of northwestern Iran. The appointment was not fortuitous for Sultaniyya, since Amiranshah had a volatile temper and a sadistic love of destruction. This temper eventually led him to ruin one of the royal tombs housed in the city, most likely belonging to the il-khan Abu Said. Nevertheless, the city still seems to have been thriving at the outset of the 16th century, when a painting by the Ottoman artist Matraki Nasuh in 1537–1538 showed the town to have lost none of its former luster. Nevertheless, the subsequent transfer of the Safavid capital to Isfahan in 1598 seems to have signaled the decline of Sultaniyya's importance, which was compounded in the 19th century when Fath 'Ali Shah Qajar decided to plunder the il-khan ruins for bricks and other material to erect his own summer palace on the site.

Michael Hope

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; *Ordo;* *Individuals:* Abu Said; Oljeitu; Timur-i Leng; *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks

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Tabriz

While the Mongols built capital cities such as Karakorum, Sarai, and Sultaniyya, Tabriz existed prior to the Mongol Empire. The city is situated in the Azerbaijan Province of modern-day Iran in the Quru River Valley and near Lake Urmiya. Known as Tarui or Tauris in the ancient sources, the site has been inhabited since 1500 BCE. During the halcyon days of the Abbasid Caliphate in the eighth century, Tabriz flourished as a trading center, as it was perfectly located at an axis point for the north-south and east-west caravan routes passing through northwestern Iran and strategically located near the best mountain pass in the region. Despite its strategic location, the city did suffer from water shortages from time to time, as the local water was too salty for drinking purposes. Rainwater had to be stored in cisterns, and water had to be brought from the mountains in subterranean water channels known as *qanat*. While it was a regionally important city prior to the Mongol conquests, it soon transcended to a city of global importance.

During Subedei and Jebé's exploration of western Iran, Tabriz escaped destruction, as its governor sent tribute, including animals, cloth, and silver. The Mongols next visited Tabriz in 1231 under the command of Chormaqan. Rather than resist, the city of Tabriz submitted to him and brought tribute, including silks and other fine cloth, wine, and provisions. At this time Tabriz was known for its cloth industry, and Chormaqan requested that the city of Tabriz not only make a tent of satin brocade for him but also make one to be sent to Ogodei, which was made with a satin exterior and lined with sable and beaver on the interior. Some of the artisans may have also been sent to Ogodei as well.

After Chormaqan's death, Baiju became the new *tammachi* in the region, and Tabriz came under his jurisdiction. While he did not plunder it, apparently it was exploited severely. When the region was transferred to the authority of Arghun Aqa, a *daruqachi* assigned to the region by Toregene, he used Tabriz as his headquarters and brought order to the area. Tabriz was one of several locations that minted coins for the Mongol Empire. During Mongke's reign, it became the sole mint for the entire empire. This was part of Mongke's plan to centralize the empire and eliminate corruption.

During Mongke's reign, Batu also acquired rights over the cities of Maragha and Tabriz. These rights were abrogated once Hulegu moved into the region after 1256 and contributed to the hostilities between Hulegu and Berke Khan of the Golden Horde.

Although Hulegu initially established his capital in Maragha in northwestern Iran, Abaqa moved the capital to Tabriz. Tabriz's transformation into the capital of the Il-Khanid state also led it to become a center of international trade and industry, not to mention the cultural center of the Il-Khanid world. It was assisted in the process not only by the il-khans making it their capital but also by the destruction of Baghdad. Although Baghdad recovered, its status had been reduced to regional importance as the economic, commercial, and political emphasis of the region shifted to Tabriz.

The Mongol court also patronized religious leaders, providing funds for the construction of mosques and madrasas. This generosity extended beyond Islam. Buddhist temples and Nestorian churches also secured funding. Tabriz also received a bishopric

RABI' AL-RASHIDI

During the reign of Ghazan, his *wazir* Rashid al-Din built a separate quarter in Tabriz that became known as the Rabi' al-Rashidi (Rashid's Quarter). Here he housed not only his scholars but also scientists and artists. Art production facilities saw Chinese, Persians, Armenians, and even a few Italians working together and transforming art in new ways that influenced Chinese art as well as the Renaissance. Through Rashid al-Din's patronage, Tabriz also boasted a medical school and a hospital. Rashid al-Din and others also supported poets, helping transform Tabriz into a leading center of Persian literature.

during the 14th century, as did Maragha. This indicates not only the Papacy's interest in converting the Il-Khanate but also the sizable number of Catholics living in the city. Most were not converts but rather Italian merchants and artisans who found employment in the service of the il-khans.

Venetians are known to have operated in Tabriz since 1264, although Genoese merchants became more prevalent, seeking to acquire "Tatar cloth" or silk brocades and *nasij*. Even before the arrival of the Mongols, Tabriz was known for its silk production. During the Il-Khanate period, this reputation only increased. Tabriz's reputation for commerce continued as monetary reform took place at the Il-Khanid mint. The il-khans minted copper and gold coins with the intent that they would be the dominant form of transaction in the Il-Khanate but also from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean. In a sense, they sought to make the Il-Khanate monetary system the primary commercial exchange system, which then facilitated trade within the Il-Khanate because the means of transaction was simplified.

Oljeitu moved the Il-Khanate capital to his new city of Sultaniyya. While Tabriz declined somewhat because of the political transition, it remained a commercially important city. It also survived the end of the Il-Khanate. It became the capital for later empires such as Qara Qoyunlu (1375–1468) and Aq Qoyunlu (1378–1508) and served as the initial capital of the Safavid Empire (1501–1722) as well until 1548, when the capital was moved to Isfahan.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; Sarai; Sultaniyya; *Organization and Administration:* Baiju; Il-Khanate; *Tammachi;* Transfer of Authority; *Individuals:* Abaqa; Batu; Hulegu; Mongke Khan; Oljeitu; *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; *Military:* Chormaqan Noyan

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Temur Khan (r. 1294–1307)

Khubilai's death left the Yuan Empire in a curious situation. He outlived most of his sons, including his handpicked heir, Jingim (1243–1285), so his grandson Temur Oljeitu came to the throne. While Toghon proved to be a very capable ruler and even defeated Qaidu on a few occasions, he also had to repair damage that occurred during the last decade of Khubilai's life. After Chabi's death, Khubilai withdrew from many of his responsibilities as emperor, succumbing to what appears to have been a combination of heavy drinking and depression. He left matters to many ministers. To be sure,

most were capable, but they often abused their power, which caused unnecessary upheaval within the government.

Temur Oljeitu's accession was not without challenge. His elder brother Kammala (1263–1302) was a viable candidate. As Khubilai's efforts to ensure smooth succession failed due to the death of Jingim in 1285, it was not guaranteed that as Jingim's son, Temur Oljeitu would be elected. He benefited from the support of many members of the Secretariat as well as the support of General Bayan. In a *quriltai* in April 1294, Temur was raised to the throne.

Temur Oljeitu continued many of his father's policies and continued to hold the line against Qaidu. With Qaidu's death in 1301, the war lost its momentum as fractures between the Chagatayids and the Ogodeyids manifested. Unlike his father, Temur Oljeitu did not see the need to expand the empire and even canceled plans to invade



Temur Ojeitu Khan (October 15, 1265–February 10, 1307) was the grandson of Khubilai Khan and the second ruler of the Yuan Empire. He is also considered the sixth Great Khan of the Mongol Empire. This portrait is found in the National Palace in Taiwan. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

Annam and Japan. He saw them as an unnecessary expense, particularly when Annam was willing to send tribute. His only foreign campaigns were punitive and small and took place in Burma in 1300–1301 and in northern Thailand in 1301–1303, which ended with desultory results. Instead, he focused on the return of the Pax Mongolica in 1304 with the end of the war against Qaidu, overland trade resumed, and the four Mongol khanates cooperated with each other. Realizing the limitations of Yuan power during the war with Qaidu, Temur Oljeitu worked diligently to promote peace with his cousins throughout the Mongol world. In return, he was recognized as the ruler of the entire Mongol Empire, although in reality his authority was limited to the Yuan territories. With stability now established, Temur Oljeitu turned to internal matters.

Temur Oljeitu sought reconciliation with his kinsmen in Mongolia proper and Manchuria. Although numerous Mongols lived in China (and throughout the Yuan Empire), significant numbers remained in the steppes. He sent lavish gifts, although this caused financial strain. Other policies to promote stability continued, such as canceling tax debts caused by ruinous fiscal policies in the last years of Khubilai's life. Temur's government also made efforts to root out corruption. In 1303, 18,373 officials were convicted; however, punishment was lenient, and many regained their posts. Unfortunately, while Temur Oljeitu promoted stability, it was short term, as lavish gifts to members of the *altan urugh* and governmental corruption meant that costs outstripped income and began to deplete the monetary reserves of the empire.

This issue was not insurmountable, however. Unfortunately, court intrigues ensured that instability at the highest level would occur after Temur Oljeitu died. After Temur's primary wife Shirindari died in 1299, he made Bulukhan empress. A woman of great ability and ambition, she played an influential role in the instability that followed Temur Oljeitu's death, which is unfortunate, as even hostile sources indicate that most of her policies and actions were just. Yet her actions took place in his lifetime. She accumulated power and wealth, often confiscating property of those charged with corruption. In some cases, she was the one who framed the accused. She also made her son the heir apparent and removed all rivals, all of them cousins, from the court and placed them in posts in distant regions. Her son Deshou, however, died in 1306, and when Temur Oljeitu died in 1307, no other heirs existed.

Despite Temur Oljeitu's efforts to secure long-term security for the Yuan Empire, his lack of heirs unraveled his plans. Now that all of the potential successors were spread throughout the empire, the race for the throne began. He who could gain the support of influential members of the bureaucracy and the military had the best chance of success. Factions broke out during Bulukhan Khatun's regency. Bulukhan herself sought to place Ananda (d. 1307), Jingim's nephew, on the throne. Another faction supported Khaishan, the son of Temur Oljeitu's elder brother Darmabala (1264–1293). Other factions also existed, and bloodshed occurred, resulting with Khaishan as the next ruler due to his superior military following and seniority.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; Yuan Society; *Individuals:* Chabi Khatun; Khubilai Khan

BAYAN NOYAN (1236–1295)

Bayan helped Temur Oljeitu to secure his position as successor to Khubilai Khan. Bayan was able to do so due to his accomplishments during the reign of Khubilai Khan. Bayan originally accompanied Hulegu to the Middle East but returned east as Hulegu's envoy to Khubilai Khan. Although his record with Hulegu was insignificant, he immediately impressed the Mongol ruler, who acquired Bayan for his own service and promoted him to the position of *chingsang* (*chingxiang*), or junior grand councilor. Bayan also married the niece of Chabi, Khubilai's primary wife. In 1274, Khubilai assigned Bayan an army of 100,000 men and tasked him with the final destruction of the Song Empire.

Known as Hundred Eyes, Bayan commanded the operations to destroy the Song Empire and appreciated the need for a navy. Accompanied by an army and 10,000 ships, Bayan advanced down the Han River. They bypassed fortresses and sought out the riverine navy and field armies of the Song Empire, destroying a major fleet (10,000 ships) in January 12, 1275. Then on March 19, 1275, Bayan defeated Jia Sidao in the Battle of Dingjia Island, where Jia Sidao led an army considerably larger than Bayan's (approximately 130,000) and over 1,000 boats. With the string of losses, Empress Xie dismissed Jia Sidao. He was later murdered. Under Bayan's leadership, the Mongol armies moved faster and more efficiently. Bayan adeptly discovered how to use the new combined-arms army corps of Mongol cavalry and Chinese infantry most effectively so that the mere sight of his red banner caused towns to surrender. Bayan then successfully gained the submission of the empresses dowager Xie and Quan Jiu on March 28.

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Titles

As with any empire, the Mongol Empire had a sense of hierarchy and developed its own aristocracy that arose through lineage as well as through a meritocracy. In addition to functionary titles such as *daruqachi* or *jarquchi* or military titles such as *tammachi* or those used in the *keshek*, such as *qorchi*, there were titles used by the elites. At the top of the hierarchy sat the khan, or more properly *khaghan*, which was the equivalent of emperor, whereas a khan was a king.

Generally speaking, the term *khaghan* was elided into "khan," as the medial "gh" in Middle Mongolian was often aspirated when spoken and not always detectable to those

who didn't speak Mongolian. Chinggis Khan was a title that no one else ever adopted. His title was posthumously changed to Chinggis Khaghan later in history. Stone inscriptions from his lifetime certify, however, that during lifetime he was only Chinggis Khan. Ogodei, however, was often referred to as Kha'an or Qa'an, rather than as Ogodei Khan, with the apostrophe serving as a placeholder for the nonvocalized "gh." In the Yuan Empire, the emperor also adopted the Chinese practice of a reign name, with reign names also being applied posthumously to Chinggis Khan, Ogodei, Guyuk, and Mongke.

The title "khan" was used for the other sons of Chinggis Khan, particularly when they ruled their own *ulus*. It is not clear whether the title was used during their lifetime, although it is certain that Tolui received the title posthumously after the Toluid Revolution. After the dissolution of the empire, khan was the common title of the ruler of the Khanates. Although Hulegu and Abaqa used the title *il-khan*, meaning subordinate to the *khaghan*, the title faded out by the reign of Ghazan Khan. As the Il-Khanate flirted with and then embraced Islam, it also adopted Islamic and Iranian titles. Sultan was quite common, although during the reign of Ghazan, the Iranian *padishah* (emperor) was also commonly used for the ruler of the Il-Khanate.

The Mongol royal women, whether queens or princesses, invariably held the title *khatun*. While hierarchy existed among the *khatuns*, no separate terms existed to delineate between them. Furthermore, any Chinggisid princess maintained the title of *khatun* even after she married. Her husband, however, acquired the title of *guregen* (*kuregen*), or son-in-law. Initially, this referred to being the son-in-law of Chinggis Khan. While it did not equate the same status of being a Chinggisid prince, it did, however, carry significant weight within the Mongolian world even long after the death of Chinggis Khan. Timur-i Leng, who was not a Chinggisid, only used the title of *amir* (commander/prince) but enjoyed the prestige that came with the status of *guregen* even in the late 14th century.

Another title related to marriage was *khuda* or *quda*, which meant an in-law. Dei Sechen, the father of Borte, was frequently referred to as *khuda*. This honorific was typically bestowed on members of the Oirat and Onggirad tribes.

Prior to the formation of the Mongol Empire, the warrior elite in Mongolia were known as *nokor*, which meant "companion." These were men who were bound to a leader as long as that chieftain could provide for them. Temujin was Toghri Khan's *nokor*. With Chinggis Khan's creation of the Yeke Monggol Ulus and the destruction of the old steppe aristocracy, there was no longer any need for the *nokor*. These transformed into the *noyad* (sing. *noyan*), or commanders. Most of the *noyad* were non-Chinggisid, but occasionally the title of *noyan* was used by a Chinggisid prince who demonstrated great martial ability. Tolui was sometimes called Ulugh Noyan, or Great Commander. As the western khanates began to Islamize, the term *noyan* went out of vogue, and the Arabic term *amir* became more common. Another substitute was the Turkic term *beg*.

A general term used throughout society was *aqqa* or *akha* (elder brother). Among the elite, *aqqa* usually followed a name to show respect for the senior member among a particular lineage. In some cases it was also used as an honorific indicating status rather than age.

DARQAN

Another title that was typically held by the nonelite but also bestowed a special status upon that person and was often inheritable was *darqan* (*tarqan*, *tarkhan*, *darkhan*). It referred to a free man, not only free from slavery but, most important, also free from taxes and exempt from being punished nine times for crimes. The title was usually given to a commoner who had performed special services for the khan. At the *quriltai* of 1206, Chinggis Khan bestowed this status upon several common herders and others who had assisted him in his rise to power such as Sorqan Shira, who helped him escape the Tay-ichiud. In addition to these privileges, later the status of *darqan* was applied to all artisans who entered state employment, although these just received tax exemption. Another group that also attended to the *ordo* of Chinggis Khan after his death received *darqan* status as an inheritable status. Over the years *darqan* also became a tribal identity.

Several honorific titles besides *aqā* existed and were not restricted to the elites. One of the most common was *ba'atur* or *bahadur*, meaning “brave, valiant.” This was often applied to Chinggis Khan’s father as well as Subedei. Another was *mergen*, or “wise.” In some cases this also referred to “sharpshooter.”

One last honorific title was *beki*. The meaning of the title is not certain, and the title was held by both men and women and appears to have been hereditary in some cases. Among the most well-known figures who used it was Sorqoqtani, who appears in the sources as Sorqoqtani Beki rather than as Sorqoqtani Khatun. Another was the shaman Usun Beki.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Mongol Empire, Dissolution of; *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; *Karachi Begs;* *Keshik;* Muqali; *Tammachi;* *Ulus;* *Individuals:* Batu; Borte; Chinggis Khan; Doquz Khatun; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Oirat; *Objects and Artifacts:* *Onggon;* *Key Events:* Toluid Revolution

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Toghon Temur (r. 1333–1370)

Toghon Temur came to the throne after his younger brother, Irinjibal (r. 1332–1333), died from illness at the age of 6 after a reign of 53 days. Previously, Toghon Temur had

been exiled to Koryo as a ploy by the empress dowager Budashiri and the commander and power behind the throne, El Temur. While Toghon Temur became the emperor of the Yuan Empire at the age of 13, he inherited a disaster that would have daunted even a ruler in his prime. His reign demonstrated the long-term effects of poor governance.

In many ways the empire should have been at its peak, as the Mongols certainly had enough time to stabilize the empire. While Toghon Temur ultimately “lost” China, it was not entirely his fault. With brief reigns and constant overturns in policies, little long-term stability was achieved. As a result, their control declined most obviously in southern China, which wore Mongol rule uneasily and with great reluctance. Banditry and rebellion increased. Mongolia began to slip from Yuan control as the dissonance between the Yuan and those in the steppe increased to the point where the nomads no longer viewed the Yuan as true Mongols but essentially as Chinese. Thus, the Yuan were caught in a perspective of being Chinese to the Mongols but Mongols by the Chinese. It was an untenable situation and came to a head during the reign of Toghon Temur. Additionally, corruption was rampant among various members of the bureaucracy, which numbered 33,000, as well as among the imperial family. Although the old Confucian civil service was brought back, it did not result in an efficient administration, as nepotism and cronyism dominated the ranks. Furthermore, the imperial family still viewed the empire as a sort of family business, which they could exploit. This only increased the resentment of the ruled.

On top of this, Toghon Temur even had legitimacy issues. There were rumors that he was not a son of Khoshila, his alleged father and that of Irinjibal, but was only adopted by Khoshila and that his mother’s father was Chinese and his mother was a Muslim, this was the reason he had been exiled to Koryo. Toghon Temur only gained power through the efforts of the chancellor Bayan, who was richly awarded for his services. Bayan intended to use Toghon Temur as a puppet to undermine the authority of his chief rival, El Temur. While Toghon Temur was young, he was old enough and shrewd enough to know his role. For much of his early reign he lived in fear, knowing that he was disposable.

The fear lessened when Bayan carried out a coup that ended the influence of El Temur in 1335. Bayan then attempted to restore the government and policies to the time of Khubilai Khan, but it is uncertain what that meant—Khubilai’s own policies varied considerably during his reign. Regardless, it was clear that Bayan sought to stabilize and improve the status of the empire. Unfortunately, reversing 50 years of change is impossible in any era. Nonetheless, he attempted to reinforce the four-division ethnic hierarchy of Mongol, Semuren, Northern Chinese, and Southern Chinese. These divisions, however, had greatly blurred, as many Chinese had assumed not only Mongolian names but also learned Mongolian and enmeshed themselves in the Mongolian hierarchy. Similar things happened with other groups. Many Semuren were culturally Chinese. His efforts to reverse this caused resentment. His fiscal measures, many sensible, added to the opposition, particularly in light of his own acquisition of property and wealth. In 1340, another coup overthrew Bayan. He later died in exile.

The coup was led primarily by a younger generation of Mongols who had lived in China and saw the ethnic distinctions in a different light. The leader of this faction, Toghto, Bayan's nephew, became the chancellor. Toghto ceased the purges and removed the ethnic restrictions. Toghon Temur, now in his 20s, began to take an active part in the government. He had also participated in the coup. Unfortunately, this is when natural disasters wreaked havoc within the empire. The Grand Canal fell in disrepair, as did many dikes and dams, particularly along the Huanghe River. This resulted in flooding followed by famine and thousands of refugees. Repairing the damage meant massive numbers of men, and the only way to achieve those numbers was through corvée labor, which again caused resentment. Part of the effort included shifting the course of the Huanghe River, which was successfully completed in 1351. Still, the flooding along with the failure of the Grand Canal only increased famine, as food supplied from the south could not reach the north.

Toghon Temur eventually removed Toghto from office as well in 1354. Toghto's dismissal was as much about the failure of his policies as about Toghon Temur's concerns of his power and influence. At the same time, Toghon Temur began to withdraw from actively ruling. He authorized his 15-year-old son Ayushiridara to assume some of the responsibilities of ruling.

Toghon Temur's decisions were disastrous. Not only was his son too young and immature to take the reins of government, but the removal of Toghto also undermined the Yuan government's central authority. Most of the important regional officials had been appointed by him. Toghon Temur had not taken steps to ensure their loyalty or replace them with others. As a result, the provinces had fewer ties to the central government.

This not only lessened the Yuan's ability to govern but also made them incapable of coordinating efforts to quell the Red Turban Rebellions that grew in intensity. When Toghon Temur reengaged in actively governing, it was too late to turn the tide. Between natural disasters and rebellions, the increasingly weak central government was incapable of dealing with crises. The Red Turbans drove Toghon Temur out of China in 1368, but for the last two years of his life he attempted to regain his kingdom.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Northern Yuan; *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; Yuan Society; *Key Events:* Red Turban Revolt; *Key Places:* Koryo

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Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246)

Toregene Khatun of the Naiman tribe was the second wife of Ogodei Khan (d. 1241), the second ruler of the Mongol Empire. Toregene, sometimes spelled Doregene, was also known as Turakina in the West and Nai-ma-chen in China. Chinggis Khan (d. 1227) gave Toregene Khatun, who was first married to a Merkit nobleman, in marriage to his son Ogodei after the Mongols conquered the Merkit. Although Toregene was Ogodei Khan's second wife, she took precedence within the family, as his first wife remained childless. With Toregene's sons as contenders for the imperial succession, she enjoyed a position of power. She acted as regent of the empire after her husband's death in 1241. Cunning and tenacious, she successfully orchestrated her son Guyuk's (r. 1246–1248) election and excelled in manipulating imperial politics. However, she died shortly after her son's election.

Even during Ogodei Khan's lifetime, Toregene Khatun issued imperial decrees in her own name, such as those mandating construction projects and the printing of Taoist texts. Interestingly, these decrees stated that if imperial governors and officials were too busy to oversee the assigned projects, they should entrust these tasks to their wives. This provides a prime example of Mongol attitudes regarding women in positions of authority, an attitude that was quite unusual for many other cultural groups during this period.

After Ogodei Khan's death in 1241, Toregene Khatun ruled as regent until a *quriltai* (council) election could be held to decide the succession. It was not uncommon for widowed Mongol queens to act as regents until the next khan could be chosen. Overall, her reign represented a period of chaos and disorganization. The Persian court chronicler Rashid al-Din criticized Toregene Khatun for failing to consult with family members during her reign, which exacerbated internal political divisions. She also implemented aggressive tax farming policies that made her highly unpopular. Toregene Khatun angered many officials during her reign, and quarrels erupted among imperial family members. This tense political climate resulted in a delayed call for the *quriltai* assembly that was necessary for a legitimate election, since many princes refused to attend. However, Toregene cultivated the support of Chagatai (d. 1241), a senior Mongol prince. To ensure Guyuk's successful election, Toregene Khatun sent many gifts and granted favors for elite Mongols.

Toregene Khatun's intelligence, cunning, and political finesse allowed her to eventually win over imperial family members and gain support for her son. Toregene's push for the election of her son Guyuk contradicted the wishes of her late husband, who had favored Shiremun for the khanship. Yet, she succeeded in her aims because she delayed the *quriltai* election until her son gained sufficient support. Toregene Khatun remained active in affairs of state even after the election of her son Guyuk, who suffered from poor health. Regardless of how independently Toregene Khatun acted as regent and mother of the third khan, she still remained in a secondary position of power, since women were not allowed to rule independently or in any permanent capacity. Toregene Khatun also damaged her reputation by her close association with a woman named

Fatima. Fatima served as Toregene Khatun's handmaiden and close confidante. Court officials and imperial family members worried that Fatima exercised too much influence over Toregene. Rumors circulated that Fatima played a role in the mysterious death of Guyuk's brother, and Fatima was eventually accused of witchcraft. Her arrest was spearheaded by Guyuk himself. He ensured that she was arrested and tortured until she confessed to practicing witchcraft with the intent to kill. Consequently, Guyuk's court carried out Fatima's execution by means of drowning.

Toregene Khatun died shortly after her son was elected as the next khan. While chroniclers described her reign in generally negative terms, it should be noted that many historical accounts were recorded by the rival Toluid branch of the imperial Mongol family. The Toluids ascended to power by successfully maneuvering the imperial succession away from the Ogodeid line. Toregene Khatun's son Guyuk died after ruling for only two years. As was customary, his widow, Oghul Qaimish Khatun, ruled as regent as his death. Her own short regency was even more unpopular than that of her mother-in-law, Toregene Khatun. The rival Toluid branch of the imperial family accused Oghul Qaimish of witchcraft, and much like Fatima, she was executed via drowning. This made Oghul Qaimish Khatun the last representative of the Ogodeid line to hold power in the empire. Ultimately, Toregene Khatun's ineffective and unpopular regency heralded the beginning of an era of power struggles and conflicts within the imperial family that eventually changed the course of the succession. Negative opinion of her regency among Mongol elites also translated into negative views of her son's and daughter-in-law's short reigns. Their collective unpopularity contributed to the Ogodeids' fall from power and the ascendancy of the more politically astute Toluids, especially the sons of Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252) who became the future rulers of a more divided Mongol Empire.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Government and Politics: Quriltai; Individuals: Guyuk; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; Ogodei Khan; Key Events: Shiremun's Coup; Toluid Revolution*

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Uzbek Khan (1282–1341; r. 1313–1341)

In the late 13th century the Golden Horde experienced civil war, due particularly to Toqta Khan (r. 1290–1312) establishing his independence from the kingmaker General Nogai. Nogai's defeat permitted Toqta to govern his kingdom. The stability he achieved in the second half of his reign laid the foundation for what might be considered the Golden Age of the Golden Horde, the reign of Uzbek Khan (r. 1312–1340), Toqta's nephew.

Several important events occurred during Uzbek's reign, including various issues with Italian merchants and the rise of Muscovy, but the single most important event during Uzbek's reign was his conversion to Islam. He was following the slow trend that occurred throughout the western portions of the Mongol Empire in which the common Turks and Mongols gradually converted to Islam on their own. The fact that a khan was converted influenced further conversions, but rarely did they make the religion the state religion, as Uzbek did. His conversion did not go unchallenged. His predecessor, Toqta, promoted Buddhism, as did many of the nobility who feared that Uzbek's adoption of Islam would force them to adopt Islamic law and abandon the *yasa*. Their concern was great enough that they attempted a coup, but the loyalty of the rank-and-file soldiers prevented it. Uzbek did not institute a dramatic shift to sharia law from the *yasa*, but Islamic law was used in situations that the *yasa* did not cover.

As with most new converts, Uzbek was initially zealous, although it is difficult to determine whether some of his actions were motivated out of religion or whether he simply sought revenge against those who opposed him. Those who challenged him based on his conversion were defeated and executed. The Buddhist clergy then also felt his wrath. The Christian population also experienced momentary discomfort when Christians were ejected from the port of Soldaia in Crimea and converted its churches into mosques. Uzbek eventually rescinded his orders after realizing that they were detrimental to trade. Still, he permitted the clergy to maintain their tax exemptions and provide services for Catholic missionaries. Furthermore, his Christian wife, a Byzantine princess, maintained her own Orthodox Christian faith. Uzbek's sister, Konchek, married a Christian, Prince Yuri of Moscow, and Uzbek permitted her to be baptized into the Christian faith. Thus, while Uzbek was a Muslim, many of his actions showed flexibility, as one might expect from a Mongol prince. Furthermore, Uzbek's newfound religion did not prevent him from waging war on other Muslims. The war with the now Muslim Il-Khanate was renewed as Uzbek invaded it. As with the previous wars, this invasion remained largely a stalemate.

Uzbek also demonstrated deft political manipulation with the Russian princes. The Russian principalities recovered from the destruction of Batu's campaign and greatly benefited from the trade brought by the Mongol Empire. Most of the Russian principalities adopted Mongol military methods in organization and in equipping their soldiers. This made them better able to participate in the wars of the Golden Horde, but it also made them more confident and more resistant to Mongol demands. To control the Russian principalities and prevent any unification, Uzbek manipulated the princes

BABA TUKLES CONVERTS THE KHAN

Sufis played a key role in converting the Mongols. Sufis were (and still are) Muslims who are neither Sunni nor Shia but seek a more personal and emotive relationship with god. To outsiders they often seemed more mystical. There are various forms of Sufism, which takes its name from the coarse wool robe they wore, and they varied greatly in belief and practice.

According to the conversion narratives, which reflect myth as much as reality, Uzbek converted when a Sufi known as Baba Tukles demonstrated his superior spiritual powers in magical combat against shamans. The shamans and Bab Tukles both underwent trials by fire, in which they stood in fire. While the shamans endured the heat for a while, Baba Tukles asked when they would put more wood on the fire, as he was chilled. This and other events convinced Uzbek that Islam was superior to his native beliefs. While the Baba Tukles story is appealing, the truth is a bit less sensational. The official histories make no mention of Baba Tukles but identify the Yasaviyya Sufi order that had been active in the steppes since the 12th century but with limited success. He also met with Ibn 'Abd al-Hamid from Bukhara, a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad. Their influence on Uzbek's conversion to Islam is more likely than the fantastic stories of Baba Tukles.

Devin Deweese, *Islam and Native Religion in the Golden Horde* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 90–125.

through shifting favoritism. Due to the hatred of the Russian population of the Mongol *basqaqs*, or representatives who collected taxes, riots often occurred whenever they appeared. This not only endangered the lives of the *basqaqs* but also placed the Russian princes in a tight spot, as they were responsible for protection of the *basqaqs*. Failure to protect the *basqaq* often ended up with the arrival of a Mongol army and the resulting destruction. In effect, it benefited no one.

Thus, Uzbek shifted the tax responsibilities to the Russian princes, permitting one to collect the taxes. In return, the prince kept a share of what was collected. The Jochid khans shifted the responsibility to prevent anyone from gaining too much power or influence. The marriage of Konchek to Yuri was actually a marriage alliance that transformed Moscow from an unimportant town into a major power among the Russians while also stripping power away from Tver', which had been a major power prior to the Mongol invasions. Moscow's strength increased when Uzbek Khan granted it the *jarlig* (decree) to collect taxes. With the income and prestige derived from the position, Yuri and Moscow's strength grew and challenged Tver'. Furthermore, if a Russian principality was reluctant to pay its taxes, the Muscovite prince could call upon Mongol assistance to persuade the principality. Uzbek also secured Rus' loyalty by aiding them against the expansion of Lithuania.

Uzbek Khan's long reign finally ended in 1340, and his son Tinibeg came to the throne in 1341. At Uzbek's death, the Golden Horde was Muslim and had a vibrant economy based on the Black Sea trade and the thriving commercial centers of New Sarai (Sarai Jadid), which Uzbek built as his capital. In a few years the golden age ended as the Black Plague stalked the Golden Horde.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Nogai; Sarai; Shamanism; *Yasa;* *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Key Events:* Black Death; Mongol Conversion to Islam; *Key Places:* Lithuania

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Women in the Court

In premodern nomadic societies, women were prominent actors across the social spectrum. The pivotal role of influential women is well documented in the Mongol Empire. The involvement of women in politics, the economy, and military activity has been depicted from antiquity onward, from serving as inspiration to the myth of the steppe Amazons narrated by Herodotus down to the active role of noble ladies present in the court of 17th-century Moghul India. The Mongol Empire is no exception to this phenomenon, counting many influential women during its history, a situation that continued throughout the various Mongol khanates once the united empire came to an end in the mid-13th century. A more straightforward indication of the significance of the role of women in the Mongol Empire can be seen in the high political office acquired by several women in the Mongol court.

The history of the Mongol Empire is rich in female characters actively participating in politics. Some women such as Toregene Khatun (r. 1242–1246) or Oghul Qaimish (1248–1250) were in charge of the political administration and government of the whole empire, assuming control of the Mongol court as regents after the deaths of their husbands. Others, such as Orghina Khatun (r. 1251–1260), appear to have reigned alone over the Chagatai Khanate in Central Asia for nine years, and some influential female regents acted as rulers on behalf of their sons in Yuan China. If these women were recognized as rulers and acquired formal recognition of their authority at court, others may have had a lower profile but not a less influential role in the political arena of the empire. Although they were never recognized as rulers, women such as Sorqoqtani Beki (wife of Tolui), Doquz Khatun (wife of Hulegu), and Chabi (wife of Khubilai Khan) played a fundamental role in the governability of the empire and acted as kingmakers, involving themselves in political disputes to promote their sons or preferred male candidates to the khanate.

Financially, courtly women acquired a portion of the immense amount of property that had circulated throughout the empire since the rise of Chinggis Khan. Wealth



Hulegu with his wife, Doqoz Khatun. A Nestorian Christian, Doqoz Khatun wielded considerable influence in the court of Hulegu. Illustration from Rashid al-Din's *Jami' al-Tawarikh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*), 14th century. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

could be acquired in different forms. For example, the property of a woman at the court consisted of animal stock, luxury products, income from tax revenues, people, and dividends from trade investment. This diverse property was stored in and administered from their personal *ordo* (camp), which functioned as an economic unit that moved with them through the territories of their realm. In turn, the amount of property that women accumulated was relevant insofar as they could use it to further their own interests. The capacity to assume a degree of financial autonomy gave them the chance to be politically influential. Their economic independence and political influence made women at court one of the first destinations for those seeking protection and patronage in the Mongol Empire. Across the empire different khatuns are credited for offering safeguard to persecuted dignitaries, members of the administration, merchants, and religious personalities.

There has been some debate about the role of court women in the Mongol army. The military being one of the most (if not the most) important institution among the Mongols, the role of women in this arena would also confirm the relatively high status of these women in premodern Mongol society. References to women actively participating in battle during the Mongol Empire exist but are scarce. The few examples mentioned in the sources seem to be more fictional than factual. However, there is enough evidence to suggest that women received some sort of military training or at least some instruction in the use of the bow and mastered riding horses from a very young age.

Further, because these women had not only properties at their disposal but also people under their command, they seem to have had a certain degree of military influence with regard to the participation of their subjects in warfare. So, if not by being in the battlefield themselves, court women in the Mongol influenced the Mongol military by sending (or not sending) those soldiers under their command to those battles where their own political, economic, or military interest was at stake.

The religious affiliation of the women at the Mongol court varies depending on the region of the empire and the time we look at. As a general overview, we could say that in the early period of the Mongol Empire, the majority of Mongol women at court were, like Mongol men, mostly shamanist. However, there were some notorious cases of women who openly showed their favoritism for Nestorian Christianity. This was the case, for example, of Sorqoqtani Beki and Doquz Khatun. Yet after the division of the empire into different khanates, women progressively adopted the religion of the majority of the population under Mongol rule. Consequently, in China it is possible to find Buddhist women at court in the Yuan dynasty, while in Iran and the Middle East Islam progressively took over from Christianity as the main religion among the khatuns. The available information about women in Central Asia and Russia is scarce, but it is believed that a similar process to that which occurred in the Il-Khanate also took place among the Golden Horde and the Chagatayid khatuns.

Bruno De Nicola

See also: *Government and Politics:* Toregene Khatun; *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; *Ordo;* *Individuals:* Borte; Chabi Khatun; Doquz Khatun; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; Orghina Khatun; Sorqoqtani-Beki; *Primary Documents:* Document 7; Document 30

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Yasa

The Mongol Empire was governed by a rule of law known as the *yasa* (*jasaq*, *yasaq*). This law code was a combination of steppe nomadic tradition and imperial decree (*jarliq*, *yarliq*, *yarligh*, *jarligh*) and was strongly influenced by the *biligs* (maxims) of Chinggis Khan and originally compiled by Chinggis Khan's adopted brother, Shiqi Qutuqtu. Although the *biligs* were often considered examples of proper and virtuous behavior, they were not laws. The *yasa* was not the law of the land but instead was applied to the nomadic population of the empire.

The great *yasa* was officially proclaimed by Ogodei during his coronation. He approved the pronouncements and decrees of his father. During the reign of Ogodei, there may have been some consideration as to whether or not the *yasa* should apply to the entire empire. This is not explicitly stated in the sources but rather is suggested in a number of anecdotes concerning Chagatai and Ogodei. In these stories, Chagatai clearly wants the *yasa* to be applied to the entire population of the empire, whereas Ogodei views the situation differently by recognizing that laws based on nomadic culture would not work for sedentary societies, particularly when many of the tenets of nomadic custom made no sense in an urban context. Furthermore, the situation only became more complex when one considered that the *yasa* would replace a legal system in China that had been influenced not only by the Jin Empire but also by centuries of Confucian thought. A similar situation existed in the Islamic world as well. Most of the examples given in the sources for debate between Chagatai and Ogodei involve Muslims violating the *yasa*, with Chagatai then learning of the offenses. The scenarios then end with Ogodei's intervention resolving the situation. The purpose of the stories in the Islamic sources are to demonstrate that Chagatai hated Muslims, while Ogodei, albeit a pagan, was a just ruler. In truth, these accounts dramatically show the Mongols coming to terms with how best to rule their new subjects who lived in cultures alien to their own.

Over time a complex legal system came into place, with the *yasa* applied to the Mongol elite, but other legal systems, based on previously existing ones, were in use locally and regionally. The *yasa*, of course, trumped all when conflicts occurred regardless of whether the subject population understood the *yasa*. During the reign of Mongke Khan the *yasa* became more formalized, even though it did not grow significantly since the time of Ogodei. The fact that it was not universally applied made it a rather unusual law code. Nonetheless, it exerted an immense amount of influence, particularly on the more conservative elements within the Mongol elite. Although there are plenty of examples of *biligs* in the primary sources, there is no surviving example of the *yasa*, if indeed a written copy of it ever existed, although the sources indicate that the *yasa* existed in written form in the Mongol treasury.

After the dissolution of the Mongol Empire, the *yasa* remained in use to varying degrees. Opponents of Khubilai Khan accused him of veering from the *yasa* of Chinggis Khan when he sought to formally create a new law code for the Yuan Empire. The same was said of Ghazan, Tarmashirin, and Uzbek Khan when they attempted to make

YOSUN

In addition to the *yasa*, another important aspect that governed the Mongols was the concept of *yosun*. This referred to social customs and conventions—what was acceptable to society. The *yosun* only applied to the Mongols, but an outsider could cause great offense by transgressing it. An example would be stepping on the threshold of a yurt, which is considered as inauspicious in Mongolian society as it is today. In addition to normal customs, the *yosun* included the *biligs* (maxims) of Chinggis Khan. Often someone's character was judged based on how that person upheld the *yasa* and *yosun*—in other words, how similar the person's behavior was to that of Chinggis Khan. In many ways the *yosun* is comparable to the concept of *hadith* in the Islamic world.

Islam the state religion and implement sharia. Just as Ogodei came to terms with ruling sedentary populations with a different set of laws, the Islamic khanates also came to the realization that accommodation was needed, even as the number of Muslim nomads increased. Detractors of the Il-Khanate within the Mamluk Sultanate vilified the Il-Khanate Mongols for still using the *yasa* during the reign of Abu Said. The same was said of Timur-i Leng, who was unequivocally a Muslim.

Despite its influence, it is difficult to say whether the *yasa* truly was a written document or if it did not exist in written form. Our knowledge of it comes from non-Mongol sources who often viewed it through their own lens of understanding. In Christian sources, particularly Armenian, it appears as a set of 10 commandments, while the Islamic sources show parallels with sharia, albeit with distinct differences. Chinese sources, however, depict the system as developing through the wisdom of Confucian scholars attempting to teach the “barbarians” how to rule as civilized Confucian kings.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Mongol Empire, Dissolution of; Uzbek Khan; *Individuals:* Chagatai Khan; Chinggis Khan; Ghazan; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

OVERVIEW ESSAY

This section examines the organization and administration of the Mongol Empire. The section includes articles on personalities who played a role in shaping and organizing the administration of the empire. Additionally, it involves the territorial organization of the empire as well as the instruments used in ruling it. The administration of the Mongol Empire evolved as it developed, with many of its core institutions manifesting during the reign of Ogodei. Mongke refined many institutions before the dissolution of the empire, but in many ways the administration of the Mongol Empire was a work in progress dependent not only on institutions but also on key figures.

Among the most important figures in the early Mongol Empire was Muqali, who is primarily known for his campaign against the Jin Empire. What is overlooked, however, is his position as commander of the left wing. This was not simply the left wing of the army but of the entire empire. Originally, the empire was based on the traditional organization of nomadic empires: left wing, right wing, and center, with a southern orientation. Thus, the left was the east, and Muqali served as Chinggis Khan's viceroy over the eastern part of the empire. Additionally, during his command in northern China, he began to govern the region as part of the Mongol Empire.

Another general who played a role in administration was Baiju. As a *tammachi*, or commander of a *tamma*, Baiju commanded Chormaqan's *tamma* after that general's death. Baiju's role as *tammachi* cannot be overlooked. While the *tamma* was a military unit (discussed in the military section), the *tammachi* served not only as military commander but also as the military governor of Transcaucasia until the arrival of Hulegu. In this capacity, Baiju was responsible for maintaining peace but also expanding the Mongol Empire, which he did with the acquisition of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. His functions were very similar to those of Muqali in northern China, who, it must be remembered, was also a *tammachi*.

Local dynasts also played a prominent role in their territories, although their direct involvement with the Mongols varied considerably. An example of one who worked closely with the Mongols was Alexander Nevsky. Although not a Mongol, Nevsky has historically been seen as a Rus' prince who submitted to the Mongols but was, in fact, much more. As a Rus' prince he did indeed submit to the Mongols, but as a vassal of the

Mongols, particularly while prince of Novgorod, he served in a capacity that was not dissimilar to the role of a *tammachi*, especially in terms of protecting the frontier and extending Mongol influence when possible.

Despite the role of military commanders and local dynasts, most of the administration was in the hands of professional civilian administrators. Two of the most important were Yelu Chucai and Mahmud Yalavach. Yelu Chucai was a Khitan whom the Mongols acquired with the fall of Zhongdu. Indeed, he may have been the most important acquisition from that city's capture. Mahmud Yalavach was a Muslim of Central Asian origin. Yelu Chucai became the chief administrator for northern China and developed a pragmatic taxation system for the region. Mahmud Yalavach operated in Turkestan until he fell afoul of Chagatai. Ogodei then replaced Yelu Chucai with Mahmud Yalavach. Yelu Chucai assumed other duties. Both men had harrowing moments during the regency of Toregene but, due to their abilities, found shelter from her machinations among other princes. Nonetheless, Yelu Chucai died from depression after his dismissal by the regent Toregene.

While Chinggisids ruled and were assisted by a number of administrators, their commanders carried great importance, which at times seemed to eclipse that of the rulers'. While many of the great ones, such as Subedei, appeared during Chinggis Khan's rise to power, the Mongols developed a method to ensure that their generals had a consistent level of knowledge. This goal was accomplished through the *keshik* (bodyguard) of the Mongol khan. Numbering 10,000, the *keshik* did much more than just guard the khan's life. It served as his household and governmental staff. Additionally, it functioned as a school for the empire's officers and highest-ranking administrators.

During the time of Chinggis Khan, merit was the primary means of promotion for commanders. Over time, however, merit ceased to be the key factor. As with any elite class, commanders sought to maintain and pass along their privileges to their offspring. While Chinggis Khan eliminated the steppe aristocracy with the unification of Mongolia, a new one emerged through his commanders. They became known as *karachis*, or those who performed the "black" or common duties. In the color symbolism of Inner Asia, white equated with royalty, while black referred to anyone else, including the nonroyal aristocrats. Known alternately as the Great Amirs (Arabic for "commander") or *karachi begs* or *beys* (a Turkic title for a military commander), the highest-ranking commanders exerted influence on the various khans. There were typically four *karachi begs*. Depending on the individual charisma and will of the khan, in the postdissolution empire, the *karachi begs* could wield significant power. The khan could be either the puppet or the master or somewhere in between. In terms of organizing and administering the postdissolution empire, the *karachi begs* increasingly played key roles in deciding governorships and who sat on the throne.

Prior to the rise of the Mongol Empire, Mongolia consisted of tribes. Although the term "tribe" is ambiguous, it generally refers to a group and connected subgroups who have a shared identity, whether through kinship (real or fictive) or other common ties. Membership was often fluid, with the composition of a tribe changing considerably over the course of decades. Chinggis Khan's policies changed the tribal identity considerably, although this identity did not completely disappear. Territorially, the Mongol Empire had

multiple layers of organization, often overlapping. The Mongol Empire, or Yeke Monggol Ulus, was vast and was viewed as the personal property of the imperial family, or *altan urug*. As such, Chinggis Khan parceled the empire into *uluses*, which could be viewed as patrimony or appanages for his sons. The *uluses* were not reserved only for the sons of Chinggis Khan. His brothers, such as Qasar, also received them. The Qasarid family administered northeastern Mongolia and parts of Manchuria during the Mongol Empire but also well beyond its end. Additionally, there were large fiscal districts for taxation purposes. Initially, there were three: northern China, Turkestan, and Mawarannahr. Each used a separate method of taxation, often simply using existing systems of taxation and administration with a Mongol layer existing on top. Gradually additional fiscal districts came into existence, including Rus' and Khursan. The fiscal districts were sedentary centric regions, with nomads being taxed through other means. While not strictly provinces, they were overseen by a *yarghuchi* who served as both judge and governor, while *daruqachis* or *basqaqs* served as the local authority and representative of the khan. Additionally, the *daruqachi* served as an intermediary between native dynasts and the empire.

Even as the empire was conquered, a civil administration was not immediately set up after the conquests, which is why there were only three (albeit very large) fiscal regions. As indicated before, the *tammachi* served as military governors over the newly conquered regions. Before a civil administration took control, a transfer of authority took place. It was part of a rational process but was often performed only grudgingly. Once the civil administration took over, the *tammachi* and his army then had to move to a new location—the new frontier. This process again is demonstrated with Baiju. He conquered the Seljuks, making Anatolia (modern-day Turkey) the new frontier, but he only moved there when Hulegu moved into the lush pastures of the Mughan steppes in Azerbaijan. Similarly, the *tammachi* relinquished control of Khurasan only when directly ordered to do so by Ogodei. Although Ogodei did not dwell there, his reluctance to turn over the revenues of the region speaks to its economic value (and hence why it became a fiscal district).

With the dissolution of the Mongol Empire in 1260, the united Mongol state fractured, and the *ulus* structure altered and formed four khanates from the former Yeke Monggol Ulus. While the *ulus* of Ogodei existed briefly and even dominated the *ulus* of Chagatai, the Chagatai Khanate emerged and eventually absorbed the Ogodeid territory. The Chagatai Khanate eventually split into two territorially defined regions—Mawarannahr and Moghulistan. The Yuan Empire comprised not only the *ulus* of Tolui but also all of China, Korea, Tibet, and more. The one Toluid *ulus* that was not included in the Yuan Empire was the Il-Khanate, which did recognize the authority of the Yuan Empire, at least in theory. Issues over territory, which had formerly been viewed as belonging to the Jochid or Chagatayid *uluses*, however, would long be a source of tension and warfare between the Il-Khanate and its neighbors.

The Golden Horde, as the Jochid Ulus is often called, is difficult to view as united simply because on many occasions it was not. The name “Golden Horde” reflects that reality. Gold was the imperial color and was used to describe the center of power. “Horde” is an English word derived from *ordo*, which means “camp” but usually the camp of someone important. Thus, in a sense it also refers to a “palace,” even if the palace was a

felt-covered yurt. Several *ordos* existed within the Golden Horde or the larger Jochid Ulus, with the khans' camp being only the most important (and hence golden).

Regardless of the era or the territorial organization, the empire was held together through a number of tools. The Mongol Empire consisted of not only a multitude of religions, ethnic groups, and cultures but also a plethora of languages. When the Mongol Empire began, it was a preliterate society. Chinggis Khan instituted a writing system for the Mongols, even as he remained illiterate. Another one was ordered by Khubilai Khan, who hoped to make it universal for all languages. While the Mongols did not impose their writing systems on the populace, knowledge of the appropriate one as well as some other key languages provided advantages to those who knew them. The messages written in Mongolian, Uyghur, or Persian (the three key languages) were then transmitted via the *yam*. This Pony Express-style postal system served as the lines of communication that kept the khan aware of what happened throughout the empire. The postdissolution Mongol Empire maintained and even expanded the *yam* system. Additionally, the rulers, officials, and local dynasts used *tamghas* (seals or stamps of authority) to verify their decrees and orders. This practice allowed a rationale process for actions such as the transfer of authority among officials but also the requisition of materials for the military, the *yam* system, and other institutions at all levels within the empire. Additionally, to administer the empire there was some need to reorganize society. As mentioned previously, this was done at the tribal level to create a single Mongol entity. Such restructuring in the sedentary areas was more difficult because the Mongols feared being assimilated among the more numerous sedentary populations. While existing administrative structures were kept in place, the Mongols also had a need to modify them to make a more cohesive structure. An example of the problems and successes are amply demonstrated in the entry on Yuan society.

The sheer size of the Mongol Empire made it administratively difficult to organize into a cohesive model. While the Mongols are often depicted as simply being parasitic and relying on the conquered to staff their administrative positions, that view is not accurate. The Mongols took an early interest in and directed the formation of a cohesive administrative apparatus. The rulers were willing to listen to advice and even heed it as long as it met their needs. At times those needs could be very parasitic from the perspective of the subjects, but one must remember that the empire was always the possession of the imperial family and existed to serve them.

Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263)

Famous in Russian history as the prince of Novgorod who submitted to the Mongols and protected Novgorod from invasion, Alexander was not native to Novgorod but grew up in Pereiaslav'. His father, Prince Yaroslav, son of Grand Prince Yuri of Vladimir, placed Alexander on the throne of Novgorod in 1236 at the age of 16. Yaroslav became grand prince of the city of Vladimir after his father died in the Battle of the Sit' River in 1238 against the Mongols.

Although the Rus' had experience with the Mongols in the Battle of the Kalka River in 1223, the great trading city of Novgorod had little knowledge of the Mongols. It did not send troops in 1223. There is a possibility that Novgorod had some knowledge of the Mongols via fur traders who did business with the city of Bulgar on the Volga River or trapped furs in Siberia. During the Mongol invasion of the Rus' principalities in 1238–1240, Novgorod escaped destruction by the Mongols due to an early spring, which transformed the routes to Novgorod into a muddy bog. Despite this reprieve, there was little question that the Mongols could have destroyed the great city the following winter. Prince Alexander, the ruler of Novgorod, saw the wisdom in submission and avoided an attack. Alexander's voluntary submission also put him in good graces with Batu Khan. Alexander remained in Novgorod until 1240, when he departed after a dispute with the populace of the city.

In return for his submission, the Mongols assisted him as needed by providing troops when other Russian princes attempted to gain territory at Novgorod's expense. Alexander's loyalty to the Mongols also benefited him, as it allowed him to focus on frontier matters rather than worrying about the Mongols. As the northwestern frontier of Rus' and Mongolian territory, Novgorod had room to expand. To this end, Alexander waged a number of campaigns against the Chud' in modern-day Estonia, a significantly less developed society. Here, Alexander not only defeated several raids but also added much of their territory to the Principality of Novgorod.

External threats from the west proved to be a constant source of irritation but cemented Alexander's place among the Russian heroes of the medieval period. The crusades in the Baltic impacted Alexander's career. Swedes sought to expand into modern-day Finland and northwestern Russia, seeking to conquer and convert Finnish tribes that paid tribute to Novgorod. Against the Swedes,



Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263) won a series of victories against the invading Swedes and Teutonic knights, notably on the river Neva in 1240, for which he is venerated as a saint by the Russians. He was also a dutiful subject of the Mongols and was maintained in his position due to his loyalty. Fresco in the Archangel Michael Cathedral in the Kremlin, Moscow. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

Alexander earned the sobriquet Nevsky for his victory over them on the frozen Neva River. The Swedes were not the only threat. As part of the crusades, the Teutonic Knights expanded into the Baltic region by subduing not only what became Prussia but also much of Estonia and Latvia. From here they continued an eastern push toward the Novgorodian city of Pskov. Despite no longer being the prince of Novgorod, Alexander rode to the rescue and drove the Teutonic Knights from Pskov, defeating them at Lake Peipus in April 1242. He also defeated Lithuanian forays into Novgorodian territory.

In 1246, Alexander was present at Guyuk's coronation and was confirmed as the ruler of Kiev. Although Alexander held the throne, he returned to Novgorod and ruled from there, perhaps preferring to have a bit of distance between himself and the Mongol court. In 1252 Alexander became the prince of Vladimir, replacing his brother Andrei. The throne became vacant when Andrei resisted traveling to Karakorum. He and his brother had traveled to the court of Guyuk. When Andrei was ordered to do so again after Mongke became khan, he refused, as he had just returned from Karakorum. Batu sent his son Sartaq to deal with Andrei's recalcitrance as well as with other princes who defied his orders. Alexander aided Sartaq and defeated Andrei. Andrei escaped the Mongols' wrath only by escaping to Sweden. He was later permitted to return in 1255 and ruled Suzdal'. In this capacity, Alexander traveled to Sarai and to Karakorum, now on his second trip. His trip to the courts of Batu and Mongke permitted him and other Rus' princes to see the extent of Mongol power. As such, Alexander realized that success required cooperation with the Mongols.

In 1257, Alexander returned to Novgorod when the Mongols came to collect the *tamgha* (customs duties). Although the city's leaders provided gifts, they did not assist the Mongols in the collection of the *tamgha*. Although the Mongols departed, Alexander remained and punished those who defied the Mongols. Because of his close relation with the Mongols, particularly Sartaq (r. 1256–1257), he not only served the Mongol Empire but also could mitigate more severe consequences for the Rus' population.

Despite his cooperation, Alexander nonetheless was ordered along with other princes to come to Sarai in 1258. Here he was informed that he, Andrei, and Boris of Rostov would accompany Mongol troops to Novgorod, which would submit to a census and pay taxes or face the consequences. In 1259 Novgorod resisted the census, forcing the Rus' princes to enforce Mongol authority. With the dissolution of the empire with Mongke's death, Alexander Nevsky presented himself to Berke in 1262 and was confirmed in his position. Alexander died while returning from Sarai.

Alexander's brothers and successors, Yaroslav and Vasily, emulated Alexander's model and accepted the khan of the Golden Horde as their sovereign. As a result, they benefited from Mongol support in internal and external matters. Mongol troops assisted in frontier battles with the Lithuanians and were also used to enforce their will over Rus' cities in succession matters.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; Sarai; *Organization and Administration:* *Tamgha*; *Individuals:* Batu; *Key Events:* Tatar Yoke; *Military:* Kalka River, Battle of the; *Primary Documents:* Document 15

THE BATTLE ON THE ICE

Although Alexander Nevsky drove the Germans out of Pskov, the threat from the Teutonic Knights did not subside until April 5, 1242. Here the Teutonic Knights along with Estonian auxiliaries once again invaded, coming from what is now Estonia. Although it was April, winter still reigned on the frontiers of Novgorod. As a result, the Teutonic Knights attempted to invade by crossing Lake Peipus, also known as Lake Chud'. Alexander led the Novgorodian forces against them. His army included a small but important contingent of Mongols. Although the Teutonic Knights' initially found success and broke the Rus' line, Alexander and his brother Andrei's more lightly armored forces successfully lured the Teutonic Knights to a weaker section of the ice, through which they plunged, making Alexander's victory complete. This battle, along with Alexander Nevsky, became immortalized in Russian memory with a 1938 historical drama film made by the renowned director Sergei Eisenstein. As a result, Alexander Nevsky became a symbol of Soviet resistance to the Nazi invasion during World War II.

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Baiju (d. 1260)

Baiju Noyan was the senior Mongol commander in Iran prior to the arrival of Hulegu in 1256. Baiju held a distinguished lineage, as his father, a member of the Besut people, had been appointed to command a *mingan* (1,000 soldiers) by Chinggis Khan. Baiju was also a close relative of Jebe Noyan, one of Chinggis Khan's most distinguished and successful generals. Baiju inherited the command of his father's soldiers as well as his position in the khan's bodyguard (*keshik*), serving as a *qorchi* (quiver-bearer). Service in the khan's guard was usually the key to future promotion within the Mongol Empire, and not long after coming to the throne, the great khan Ogodei (r. 1229–1241) appointed Baiju to join a *tamma*, led by Chormaqan Noyan, in a campaign to subdue the remnants of the Khwarazmian army and to establish Mongol rule over Iran. In 1234 Chormaqan's army arrived in Iran and successfully defeated the Khwarazmshah resistance, establishing effective Mongol control over the region. Chormaqan's army then settled on the grassland to the south of the Caucasus Mountains, known as Mughan, where he granted his senior commanders, including Baiju, districts to govern and tax.

Chormaqan's command of the *tamma* army in northern Iran lasted for only a short time. After his initial success over the Khwarazmians, he led a series of campaigns into the Transcaucasus and against northern Iraq before dying in 1240. Chormaqan's

commanders joined with his widow, Altan, in naming Baiju as his replacement. Envoys were then dispatched to Mongolia to seek Ogodei's approval for his appointment, which arrived in 1241. In the meantime, Baiju led his army on an aggressive campaign of expansion westward against the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. His first campaign began in 1242 and succeeded in capturing the major town of Erzerum, where he looted and massacred the population before returning to his pastures in Mughan. He returned to raid Rum again the following year, but this time the Seljuk sultan Ghiyath al-Din Kaykhusraw brought a large army to meet him in the valley of Kose Dagħ near Sivas. Although Baiju's army was perhaps half the size of that commanded by Kaykhusraw, the latter's soldiers were overconfident, and Baiju defeated him. The Battle of Kose Dagħ began the gradual incorporation of Anatolia into the Mongol Empire and prompted both the Seljuks and their neighbors, the Armenian rulers of Cilicia, to submit to the Mongols.

The administration of Anatolia remained with the Seljuk sultans, who paid tribute to Baiju and the Mongol Empire. After the death of Kaykhusraw in 1246, Baiju played a far more active role in the administration of Rum. Kaykhusraw's three sons contested the succession, seriously weakening the Seljuk government and causing many of Kaykhusraw's former commanders and companions to view Baiju as a potential arbiter and source of stability. During this period he is mentioned as interceding in the appointment of armies in Rum and providing shelter to political refugees. Baiju struck up several friendships with members of the Seljuk court, and some sources suggest that he was converted to Islam by members of the religious elite at the Seljuk capital of Konya. Yet many of these accounts seem to be highly fanciful, and a more accurate assessment of his attitude to Islam may be gleaned from the comments of the Sufi sheikh and poet, Mawlana Jalal al-Din Rumi, who is said to have surmised that "Baiju is a Friend of God, but he doesn't know it."

In the years following the Battle of Kose Dagħ, Baiju continued to play a central role in the Mongol administration of the Middle East. In May 1247 he received an envoy from Pope Innocent IV, inviting the Mongols to accept Christianity and stop attacking Eastern Europe. Baiju returned the ambassador with a threatening message, demanding that the pope submit or be destroyed. Baiju also remained active in campaigns against the Abbasid Caliphate, raiding northern Iraq in 1245 and 1249–1250. Baiju may also have played an instrumental part in the dispatch of Hulegu to Iran in 1253. Having failed to break the much larger and better-equipped Abbasid army, Baiju sent messages to the great khan Mongke complaining of the caliph's stubborn resistance. These messages were, according to the il-khan vizier Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah, one of the main considerations in Mongke's decision to send his brother Hulegu with a larger army to conquer Baghdad.

When Hulegu did move against Baghdad in 1258, Baiju played an important role in first defeating an army sent to intercept him and then besieging the western gate of the city before it fell. Yet Hulegu's arrival did not bode well for Baiju, who was executed shortly after the fall of Baghdad. It has been suggested that Baiju's close ties to the rulers of the Golden Horde may have been one factor in his demise, but it also seems that Hulegu had grown wary of Baiju's independence in Anatolia. Baiju himself seems to have been unsettled by Hulegu's arrival, and several sources state that when the latter

set out to invade Iraq, Baiju initially refused to join the campaign, proffering several excuses for his absence. But Hulegu insisted on his presence, even sending an army to retrieve him, and so the reluctant Baiju participated in the Siege of Baghdad. However, it was not long before Hulegu learned of Baiju's disobedience and subsequently poisoned him in 1260, shortly before the invasion of the Levant.

Michael Hope

See also: *Government and Politics:* Inju; *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; *Tammachi;* *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Hulegu; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Military:* Baghdad, Siege of; Chormaqan Noyan; Kose Dagh, Battle of; *Tamma*

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Blue Horde

The Jochid Ulus, commonly referred to as the Golden Horde, actually consisted of a number of patrimonies known as *uluses* or *ordos* (camps). *Ordo* gradually transformed into the English word "horde." The Golden Horde was usually viewed as the dominate *ordo* within the Jochid realm but in truth only consisted of the western portions of the Jochid domains. The eastern portion was the Blue Horde and was ruled by the descendants of Jochi's eldest son, Orda. The term "Golden Horde" was a 16th-century appellation that originated with the Russians. The Mongols referred to the two divisions as the blue (eastern) and white (western) *ordos*.

The Aral Sea and the Sari Su River served as the western boundary of the Blue Horde, which stretched to the Irtysh River in the east. The Syr Darya River formed the southern border, but it is uncertain just how far north the Blue Horde's authority reached into Siberia. Although it may not have reached to the Arctic Ocean, the Blue Horde nonetheless exerted a distant suzerainty over the Ostyak and Vogul tribes in the distant north and collected a tribute of luxurious furs and amber. Although the Blue Horde consisted of mainly nomads, a number of small yet important agricultural and commercial centers existed. Most of the region remained shamanistic until the 14th century, when Islam began to make significant inroads into the region, particularly on the southern frontier of the Blue Horde.

The Blue Horde was subordinate to the Golden Horde for most of its existence. This was due to political agreements rather than military force. Although Orda was senior to Batu, Batu was viewed as the leading son of Jochi. Nonetheless, Orda played a significant

role in the history of the Mongol Empire, often serving as Batu's representative including at Guyuk's election and in the Toluid Revolution. Troops from the Blue Horde also took part in Hulegu's invasion of the Middle East, and the Blue Horde supported Ariq Boke over Khubilai Khan.

After the dissolution of the empire, however, the Blue Horde gradually asserted its independence, particularly when Nogai's authority made it difficult to ignore who actually controlled the affairs of the western portion of the Jochid domains. During the reign of Qonichi, who died in the late 1290s, the Blue Horde followed its own path but maintained amiable relations with the Golden Horde. Qonichi aided Qaidu initially but then became concerned about his neighbor's growing power. In 1288, Qonichi achieved accommodation with Khubilai Khan. While it is not clear if Qonichi recognized Khubilai's supremacy, at the very least they came to an understanding of neutrality. Qonichi also made peace with the il-khan Arghun.

After Qonichi died, his eldest son Bayan Khan (1299–1313), succeeded him. Bayan's rule was challenged by his younger brother and then a cousin, Kupalak, who allied with Qaidu. Kupalak drove Bayan from his throne, which then led to an alliance among the Golden Horde, the Blue Horde, and the Yuan Empire against Qaidu. With Qaidu's death in 1301, Kupalak's allies had less enthusiasm to continue the war. Without their aid, Bayan with troops from the Golden Horde defeated Kupalak after a decade of war. Bayan regained his throne but died not long afterward. His son Saqsi Buqa (r. 1312–1320) ruled a slightly expanded empire, having gained some territories once controlled by Qaidu and his heirs. It appears as if Bayan had become subordinate to the Golden Horde again as well, perhaps in exchange for military support against Kupalak.

The Blue Horde, however, asserted its independence again in the mid-14th century during the reign of Chintai Khan (r. 1344–1360), although independence may not have happened until the death of the Golden Horde khan Birdi Beg Khan (r. 1357–1359), after which the Golden Horde went through a rapid succession of khans. Although the Blue Horde had regained its independence, it did not necessarily gain stability. After Chintai Khan died, the Blue Horde experienced as number of coups and countercoups as the various heirs of Orda fought over the throne.

While this fight was occurring, the descendants of another of Jochi seized power. Toqa-Temur was Jochi's 13th son. Being far removed from power, the Toqa-Temurids languished in obscurity but bided their time. During the Blue Horde's civil wars, Qara-Nogai (r. 1361–1363) seized power. The fourth Toqa-Temurid, Mubarakh Khoja (d. 1368), stabilized ruled and minted coins in his name. His successor was Urus Khan (1368–1378), who solidified the Blue Horde and sought to interfere in the Golden Horde with ambitions to unify the Jochid realm again.

Urus Khan was stymied in his efforts, however, by Toqtamysh, who gained support of the powerful Central Asian warlord Timur-i Leng. Toqtamysh defeated Urus and became the ruler of the Blue Horde. He then reunited all of the Jochid realm but then warred with Timur-i Leng, who proved to be a military genius of rare talent. The Jochid realm never recovered. Like the Golden Horde, the Blue Horde lingered on but disappeared in the mid-15th century as it was absorbed by the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and Oirat.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Guyuk's Election; Khubilai Becomes Khan; Nogai; Paiza; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Individuals:* Batu; Jochi; *Key Events:* Toluid Revolution

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Chagatai Khanate

The Chagatai Khanate stretched from the frontiers of Uyghurstan in the east and was bordered by the southern slopes of the Tien Shan and the northern Kunlun Mountains to the Amu Darya to roughly the Talas River and Lake Balkhash in the north. The population consisted of a mix of nomads and sedentary populations in cities supported by the caravan trade of the Silk Road. Ruling the region had its challenges, as very little of it had consistently been part of a single state, unlike in the Yuan or Il-Khanid territories. The Chagatayids remained true to their nomadic roots and viewed the cities as a source of wealth to be exploited; taxation was not the only way to exploit them, as plundering remained an option for some princes. As a result, the sedentary areas remained peripheral to their interests for most of the khanate's existence.

After the rise of Mongke Khan, Qara Hulegu gained the Chagatayid throne with Mongke's support, replacing Yesu Mongke, Guyuk's appointee. Qara Hulegu, however, died in 1252, leaving his wife Orghina as regent for his young son Mubarak Shah. During the dissolution of the Mongol Empire, Ariq Boke's supporter, Alghu, successfully seized power after 1260 but soon sought independence. When Ariq Boke attempted to restore control, Khubilai's interference caused him to withdraw.

After Ariq Boke was defeated, Orghina married Alghu in 1264 with the condition that Mubarak Shah would be his successor. Alghu expanded into the Golden Horde and Qaidu's territories, but his untimely death in 1265 allowed Qaidu to recover and reclaim Ogodeyid pastures. His success and defiance of Khubilai soon started a decades-long border war in that region that affected the Chagatai Khanate.

With Alghu's death, Mubarak Shah became the Chagatayid khan in 1266. Khubilai Khan disapproved. Although Alghu and Orghina both had recognized Khubilai as the

Mongol khan, Orghina placed Mubarak Shah on the throne without consulting Khubilai. Khubilai sent Baraq a great-grandson of Chagatai who grew up in Khubilai's *ordo* and thus was expected to be loyal. Orghina remained in place, but Khubilai sent Baraq to corule with her as his representative as well as to open another front against Qaidu.

Baraq, however, proved to be quite independent and invaded parts of Khubilai's western frontier in modern-day Xinjiang Province. Baraq soon also found himself under pressure from Qaidu's expansion toward the Syr Darya, forcing a reconciliation with Khubilai promising Qaidu's territory to Baraq. He defeated Qaidu initially, but in 1267 the two fought a major battle at Khojand, located along the Syr Darya, where Qaidu won with reinforcements from Mongke Temur (r. 1266–1280), the Golden Horde's khan.

Before conflict arose anew between the Golden Horde, Qaidu, and Baraq they attempted to resolve their conflict peacefully and in the name of unity. Thus, the three parties agreed to the Peace of Qatwan in 1267. As part of the conditions of the Peace of Qatwan, Baraq invaded the Il-Khanate, which led to his death in 1271 after being defeated. With the death of Baraq and with Mawarannahr under his control, Qaidu now held a *quriltai* in which he was crowned as khan in September 1271, one month after Baraq's death. Although Qaidu now ruled the Ogodeyid and Chagatayid patrimonies, he made Du'a, Baraq's second son, the Chagatayid khan in 1282 to quell Chagatayid opposition.

Du'a supported Qaidu throughout his war with Khubilai and then against Khubilai's successor, Temur Oljeitu (1294–1307). After Qaidu's death in 1301, Qaidu's son, Chapar, assumed the mantle of leadership and continued his father's policies, but he lacked his father's ability. Du'a usurped Chapar in 1303 and took control. The Ogodeyids attempted to challenge Du'a. Du'a, however, tired of war, acknowledged Temur Oljeitu. Du'a then conspired with Temur Oljeitu to end all Ogodeyid resistance to Du'a's rule. By 1307 the war came to an end, with the Ogodeyids completely defeated and most of the Ogodeyid Army transferred to the Yuan Empire.

Afterward the Chagatayids were not involved in any major wars, although border clashes did occur. The border between the Chagatayids and Il-Khanids remained contested, particularly in present-day Afghanistan. The Chagatayids eventually held the lion's share, from which they launched raids against the Sultanate of Delhi. Their goals appear to have been less about conquest and more focused on plunder.

Despite stability, the Chagatai Khanate stagnated, as its nomadic rulers did little more than extract tribute from the sedentary population and raid India. Some changes occurred with the rise of Tarmashirin (r. 1326–1333). Originally a Buddhist, he converted to Islam. Although he was not the first Muslim Chaghtayid (Mubarak Shah was the first), his conversion marks a shift in Chagatayid policies. His conversion did not mean an immediate shift, but he began to prefer the Muslim regions of his empire. Although there were Muslims north of the Syr Darya, Tarmashirin preferred to dwell in Mawarannahr, which shifted the political center of the empire as well, leading to a split into what became known as Moghulistan and Mawarannahr. Ultimately he was removed from the throne in 1333.

In the late 14th century, the Chagatai Khanate further splintered. With the rise of Tamerlane in 1370, Mawarannahr was lost to the Chghatayids. Their rule in Moghulistan continued in the 1400s but diminished as they came under pressure from new powers such as the Oirat, Uzbeks, and Kazakhs.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Mongol Empire, Dissolution of; *Organization and Administration:* Mawarannahr; Moghulistan; *Individuals:* Chagatai Khan; *Key Events:* Peace of Qatwan; Tarmashirin, Overthrow of; Toluid Revolution

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Golden Horde

The Golden Horde is best known as that part of the Mongol Empire that ruled Russia. Originally, it consisted of those lands that Chinggis Khan (1165–1227) bequeathed to his son Jochi (fl. 1184–1225). These lands consisted of the territories west of the Irtysh River. Jochi, however, did not have the opportunity to expand his realm, as he died in 1225, two years prior to Chinggis Khan's death.

During the reign of Ogodei Khan (d. 1240/1241), the successor of Chinggis Khan, the Jochid *ulus*, or realm, exploded in size. In 1237 Jochi's son Batu (1227–1255), assisted by the famous Mongol general Subedei, led a large army westward. In route they destroyed Bulgar, pacified the numerous Turkic tribes of the steppes, and conquered the Russian cities. Then in 1240 Mongol armies invaded Hungary and Poland, winning victories over the knights of Europe at Mohi in Hungary and Liegnitz in Poland. As news spread of the ferocity of the Mongol attack, Europe trembled in anticipation of an attack that never came. In 1241 Ogodei Khan died, and the Mongol armies withdrew back to Russia to elect a new khan.

Despite an intense rivalry with Guyuk Khan, Ogodei's son, Batu established the Golden Horde, as his territory was known, as a semi-independent part of the Mongol Empire. The origins of the name Golden Horde are uncertain. Some scholars believe that it refers to the camp of Batu and the later rulers of the horde. In Mongolian, "Altan Orda" refers to the Golden Camp or Horde. *Altan* (golden) was also the color connoting imperial status, whereas other colors referred to directions, such as north, east, south, and west.

Several of the sources also mention that Batu possessed a tent covered with *nasij*, a gold brocade cloth, and it is from this that the Golden Horde received its name. While this legend is found in numerous sources, no one is positive of the origin of the term “Golden Horde,” as it only appears in Russian sources in the 16th century. Contemporary Islamic sources refer to it as the Bilad-i Kipchak (Land of the Kipchaks), as the Kipchaks made up the majority of the Mongol forces in the khanate.

Batu died in 1255, and the next significant ruler (numerically the fourth) was his brother Berke (1255–1267). Berke, a convert to Islam, focused most of his energies against the Il-Khanate of Persia. The founder of the Mongol Il-Khanate, Hulegu sacked Baghdad in 1258 and ended the Abbasid Caliphate. Berke also completed an alliance with the Mamluk Sultanate, also an enemy of the Il-Khanate. The war with the il-khans lasted until the final collapse of the Il-Khanate in 1335, with a few brief periods of peace.

The fifth ruler was Mongke Temur (1266–1279), who continued much as his predecessors did. The war against the Il-Khanate continued. In addition, the Golden Horde increasingly dominated trade and was the most powerful state in Europe. After Mongke Temur’s death, many of the khans became puppets who were controlled by generals, such as Nogai (d. 1299). The golden age of the Golden Horde occurred between 1313 and 1341 during the rule of Uzbek Khan, when the Golden Horde reached its pinnacle in terms of wealth, trade, influence, and military might. Uzbek Khan led the Golden Horde into conversion to Islam, with the cities of Sarai and New Sarai emerging as major Muslim centers. During the mid-14th century, however, the Golden Horde weakened as it, like much of the world, suffered from bubonic plague, civil wars, and weak rulers. Between 1357 and 1370, eight khans ruled.

In addition to their wars with the Il-Khanate, the Golden Horde dominated the Russian principalities. Although much has been written about an oppressive Mongol or Tatar Yoke, the Russians also reaped numerous advantages in terms of trade and protection, eventually supplanting the Golden Horde as the dominant power in the steppes of Asia. The Russians’ first victory was against Mamai, a pretender to the throne. Although he sacked Moscow in 1380, he was later defeated in the Battle of Kulikovo. The Russians claimed it as a major victory, but in reality it accomplished little, as Toqtamysh (1383–1391) defeated Mamai in 1383 and then proceeded to sack Moscow again.

Toqtamysh may have been able to restore the Golden Horde to its former glory and did reunite it, but he became embroiled in a series of wars with Timur-i Leng (1369–1404). Also known as Tamerlane in the West, Timur emerged victorious, and after 1391 Toqtamysh died in obscurity. Sarai and New Sarai were sacked, and the trade routes never recovered from Tamerlane’s predations. Many scholars view his wars with the Golden Horde as its true death knell, for the Golden Horde never fully regained its strength with Toqtamysh’s demise.

With the death of Toqtamysh, the Golden Horde went into a downward spiral and eventually fragmented. By the mid-15th century, the Golden Horde had shattered into the Crimean Khanate, the Astrakhanate, the Sibir Khanate, Kazan Khanate, the Nogai Horde, and the Great Horde. The final death knell came in 1480, when the Muscovites on the Ugra River defeated the Great Horde.

Although the Golden Horde ended, several Inner Asian nations still trace their origins to it. The Uzbeks, the Kazakhs, and of course the numerous Tatars of Kazan and Crimea view themselves as descendants of the Golden Horde.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Sarai; Uzbek Khan; *Organization and Administration:* Alexander Nevsky; *Individuals:* Batu; Chinggis Khan; Guyuk; Hulegu; Jochi; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; Timur-i Leng; *Key Events:* Black Death; Europe, Invasion of; Mongol Conversion to Islam; Tatar Yoke; *Military:* Baghdad, Siege of; Liegnitz, Battle of; Mohi, Battle of; *Primary Documents:* Document 48

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Il-Khanate

The Il-Khanate was an autonomous khanate established by Chinggis Khan's grandson, Hulegu (d. 1265), after the death of the great khan Mongke in 1259. The Persian sources of the early 14th century describe the Il-Khanate's borders as stretching from the Oxus River in the east to the Euphrates River in the west, and its territory included the modern-day states of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. The term "il-khan" is widely believed to mean "subordinate khan" or "subject khan" in reference to the fact that the il-khans continued to recognize the authority of the great khan in China. Yet an alternate reading of the title is "khan of peace," suggesting the tranquility and justice brought by Mongol rule.

The Il-Khanate emerged as part of the military expansion that took place during the reign of the great khan Mongke (r. 1251–1259). In 1253 he dispatched his brother, Hulegu, with an army to destroy the Shiite sect, known as the Nizari Ismailis, whose fortresses dotted northern Iran, Iraq, and Syria, and to obtain the surrender of the Abbasid Caliph of Baghdad. Hulegu arrived in Iran in the autumn of 1256 and immediately set about achieving the subjugation of the Ismailis, whose leader, Rukn al-Din Khurshah, surrendered in December of the same year. Hulegu subsequently conquered Baghdad in a bloody siege during 1258 before moving his army into Syria. In 1260 he received the news of Mongke's death and withdrew to Azerbaijan in northwestern Iran, where he assumed control of the Mongol territories in the Middle East. There is considerable debate as to whether Mongke intended Hulegu to rule these territories independently or whether Hulegu simply took advantage of the succession struggle between his

brothers, Khubilai and Ariq Boke, to seize these lands for himself. In any case, Hulegu's support for the candidacy of his brother, Khubilai, and his successful defense of the Il-Khanate against other Chinggisid princes ensured his control of the region.

The administrative and economic center of the Il-Khanate was situated in the territories of Azerbaijan and Mughan. This region's rich pastures allowed the Mongols to graze their animals during the summer months, and its position on major trading roads between Anatolia, the Pontic steppe, Iraq, and Iran gave it easy access to most of the major centers of the Il-Khanate. In addition to the main pastures in Mughan, the il-khans also posted frontier armies along the Oxus River in Khurasan, the Transcaucasus, and in Diyarbakr, in northern Mesopotamia, to guard against enemy attack.

The administration of the Il-Khanate was carried out by a mix of native princes, Mongol officials, and Persian bureaucrats. Upon his arrival in Iran, Hulegu received the submission of the local rulers in Fars, Rum (Anatolia), Luristan, Kirman, Herat (in Afghanistan), Georgia, Sistan, Armenia, and Yazd. Hulegu permitted these princes to retain control over their lands in return for the regular payment of tribute to the il-khan treasury. The territories that had been violently conquered by Hulegu's armies in Iraq and northern and central Iran were entrusted to officials serving in the *diwan* (civil bureaucracy), which was primarily responsible for the collection of revenue. Each major town in the realm also received its own overseer (*daruqachi*), who was responsible for ensuring the orderly collection of the revenue and the loyalty of the local officials.

Il-khan rule was a turbulent time for the Middle East, characterized by very violent economic and demographic shifts. The conquest of Baghdad and the social dislocation that followed saw Tabriz and Cairo emerge as heirs to the status of cultural and spiritual capital of the Islamic world. The close proximity of Tabriz to the il-khan court (*ordu*) meant that it absorbed much of the revenue and patronage spent by the Mongol rulers. It became a magnet for the most famous artists, scientists, merchants, and spiritualists of the Il-Khanate, who flocked to the city in the hopes of winning royal recognition. Other cities in the west of Iran, such as Qazwin and Isfahan, also enjoyed considerable expansion under il-khan rule. The east of the Il-Khanate, on the other hand, seems to have entered a period of decline, due largely to the displacement and destruction caused by Chinggis Khan's initial invasion and subsequent conflict between the Il-Khanate and the Chagatai Khanate.

Despite this instability, the il-khans oversaw a period of artistic and literary efflorescence, especially in Iran. The il-khan court was a vibrant multicultural center of intellectual and cultural exchange, populated by Mongol commanders, Central Asian merchants, Chinese physicians, Tibetan monks, Indian yogis, Christian missionaries, and Turkish bureaucrats.

The Il-Khanate collapsed abruptly in 1335 when the last effective il-khan, Abu Said Bahadur Khan (r. 1318–1335), died after failing to produce a male heir. A period of instability followed as his senior commanders and officials formed into factions supporting rival candidates to the throne. The ensuing succession struggle resulted in the division of the Il-Khanate into several regional emirates, most of which were incorporated into the empire established by Amir Timur after 1380.

Michael Hope

CULTURE FLOURISHES UNDER THE IL-KHANS

As the il-khans consolidated their rule over the Middle East, many of their fashions and technologies were spread throughout the region, with dramatic results. The il-khan era is rightly regarded as the golden age of Persian literary history, both for the number and quality of the texts produced during this period. The spread of Chinese printing technology reduced the price of paper, making writing possible for a much wider segment of the population. This democratization of writing, combined with the fact that Persian was the administrative language of the il-khan court, meant that it soon replaced Arabic as the literary and administrative language of much of the Middle East. The cheap paper was also used by artists, who began the tradition of miniature paintings perfected by the Timurids and Safavids in the 14th and 15th centuries. Many of these artists were inspired by contemporary Chinese artists working at the il-khan court who acquainted their Iranian students with many of the techniques and styles used in East Asian painting.

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Khurasan; *Individuals:* Abaqa; Chinggis Khan; Hulegu; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; Timur-i Leng; *Military:* Ayn Jalut, Battle of; Baghdad, Siege of; *Primary Documents:* Document 43

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Karachi Begs

The term *karachi beg* (also *qarachu beg*) can be loosely translated to mean "commoner commander" and was applied to the senior military leaders of the Later Golden Horde, particularly the Crimean Khanate, during the 15th and 16th centuries. The *karachi begs* were said to have represented the interests of the propertied Tatar elite against the state, represented by the khan and his household. Their powers included participating in the *quriltais* (council of notables) responsible for nominating khans, cosigning all decrees and letters written by the khan, and advising him on all important policy matters. There were usually four *karachi begs*, but their numbers fluctuated in accordance with the political exigencies of the time. The leading *karachi begs* of the Crimean Khanate were drawn ostensibly from the Shirin, Barin, Qipchaq, Arghin, and Manghit families, whose ancestors were said to have been present during the creation of the Golden

Horde between 1237 and 1242. The most senior *karachi beg* was known as the *bash karachi*, or *beylerbeyi*, and was permitted to marry a royal princess in recognition of his high status. The power of the *karachi begs* reached its peak in the Crimean Khanate during the final decades of the 15th century and the beginning of the 16th century, when they played an integral role in the military and political ambitions of the khans.

The origins of the *karachi begs* remain obscure, since the office was first documented by the Turkish-language sources of the Crimean Khanate during the 16th century, almost 300 years after the emergence of Chinggis Khan. It is possible that the institution was known by different titles during the early Mongol Empire with *ulus amirs* (commanders of the camp/court), *noyanan-i buzurg* (great commanders), and *arkan-i dawlat* (pillars of state) all being possible antecedents. More recently, Christopher Atwood has suggested that many of the functions performed by the *karachi begs* were also performed by the four captains of the imperial bodyguard (*keshik*), who held the title *otogu*. The *otogus* played a much more marginal role in the functioning of the early empire than the *karachi begs*, but the Mongol had a tendency to grant offices on a hereditary basis. This meant that the *keshik* families soon became entrenched in their powers, allowing them to expand their influence over the state. Indeed, the term *qarachu* (*karachi*) was employed most widely by the Persian sources of the early 14th century to refer to non-Chinggisid commanders who had begun to usurp the authority of the khans, particularly in the Il-Khanate. For example, in 1295 when Prince Ghazan learned that his uncle, the il-khan Geikhatu (r. 1291–1295), had been deposed by a group of senior commanders, he angrily wrote to his cousin Baidu remonstrating that *yasa* of Chinggis Khan never permitted *qarachu* harming a descendant of his family, yet now the *qarachu* killed Geikhatu. It is therefore highly likely that the sources of the Later Golden Horde adopted the term *karachi* from the Persian histories to describe a similar group of non-Chinggisid commanders in their own territories.

The *karachi begs* have been described as a conservative element within the Crimean Khanate, eager to preserve Mongol institutions and customs in the face of increasing Islamization and sedentary settlement pushed by the ruling Giray dynasty. The *karachi begs* supported their claim to offices, wealth, and titles with reference to the *Yasa* of Chinggis Khan, and the soldiers they commanded have been characterized as tribal. The extent to which the *karachi begs'* armies were formed on the basis of shared ancestry is highly dubious, given that many of their contingents were created well after the formation of the Crimean Khanate and would have therefore incorporated members from outside their extended families. The loyalties of these supposed tribal groupings rarely followed kinship lines, and internecine conflict among their leaders was not rare.

The influence of the *karachi begs* began to wane with the appointment of Sa'adat Giray Khan to the throne of the Crimea in 1523. Sa'adat was enthroned with the support of the Ottoman Empire after his predecessor, Mehmed Giray, had been murdered by members of the Tatar aristocracy. Sometime after his arrival, Sa'adat led a band of 500 Ottoman musketeers to Kirk-Yer, the capital of the *bash-karachi*, Bakhtiyar Mirza, and had the latter and his dependants massacred. A struggle then ensued between Sa'adat and the *karachi begs*, and the khan was forced to flee back to Istanbul. Nevertheless, Sa'adat's successor Sahib Giray continued the former's policy of reform, and backed

OTHERS ALSO INFLUENCED THE KHAN

The *karachi* begs operated as one of several groups exercising influence over the Crimean khans. Many of the princes belonging to the royal Giray dynasty also held control of vast estates and armies, which they used to manipulate the policies of the Crimean government. The courtiers and household staff of the khan, known as service begs, likewise had an immense influence over the khan as a result of their close proximity and friendship with him. Moreover, the Crimean Khanate controlled a significant sedentary population, located mainly in the trading towns along the Black Sea. They too made their voices heard at the khan's court through their religious leaders (*'ulama*). It is therefore easy to overestimate the importance of the *karachi* begs in the highly dynamic Crimean court.

by an Ottoman army, he manipulated the rivalries between the *karachi* begs to achieve ascendancy over his realm.

Michael Hope

See also: *Government and Politics: Quriltai; Organization and Administration: Golden Horde; Keshik; Individuals: Chinggis Khan; Groups and Organizations: Tatars*

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Keshik

The *keshik* (bodyguard) of Chinggis Khan began from a rather humble origin before it evolved into one of the most important institutions of the Mongol Empire. From a unit of a few hundred men in its origins in 1204 for Chinggis Khan, it reached 10,000, who in addition to performing the basic task of guarding the khan served in a variety of tasks: *qorchi*, or archer; *siba'uchi*, or falconer; *jarliqchi*, who wrote and implemented imperial decrees; *bichechi*, who recorded annals for the emperor; *borchi*, who cooked and served drink; *ulduchi* or *koldolchi*, who assisted the emperor with his sword and bow; *balaghchi*, who were in charge of the palace gates or approaches; *darachi*, who were in charge of

wine; *ulachi* or *moronchi*, who were in charge of the wagons and horses; *sugurchi*, who were in charge of garments for imperial use; *temechi*, who tended camels; *qoninchi*, who tended sheep; *qulaghanchi*, who captured thieves and seem to have acted as police; *qurchi*, who played music and are not to be confused with the *qorci*; and *ba'adur*, the braves or warriors whom all members of the *keshik* should strive to be like.

Furthermore, the *keshik* served in many ways as a training school for the Mongol army. Aside from a few commanders who emerged from Chinggis Khan's youth, the majority came from the *keshik*, which meant that the khan knew them personally and appointed them to their commands based on his personal knowledge of their ability and character. In addition to serving as a military academy, the *keshik* also served as a reservoir for civil administrators by providing training. As with generals, most of the district governors came from the *keshik*.

Among the benefits that the *keshik* bestowed as a leadership academy was that the Mongol generals gained consistent and systematic training in the tactics and strategies used by the Mongols. Thus, the *keshik* was better able to function as a unit on the battlefield rather than individual commanders directing personal armies, as was the case in European and Middle Eastern armies. Indeed, one key difference between the Mongols and their opponents was the consistency of command among the Mongols. It is rare that one power produced several generals of such high quality in such a short period: Subedei, Jebe, Muqali, and Bayan, to name just a few.

The institution of the *keshik* was founded on Chinggis Khan's four *kulu'ud* (heroes): Bor'ul, Borju, Muqali, and Cila'un. Originally, it consisted of 80 *kebte'ul* (night guards) and 70 *turqa'ud* (day guards), with an additional *minqan* that escorted him into battle. At the *quriltai* of 1206, Chinggis Khan increased the *keshik* considerably to a total of 10,000. He did so by recruiting the sons of the *noyad* of the various units ranging from those of the *tumen-u noyad* to the sons of the *arban-u noyad*. Furthermore, as Chinggis Khan always welcomed talented individuals regardless of rank or social status, he also included sons of commoners who were not only deemed suitable to serve the khan but were also of good appearance.

Through his recruitment methods, Chinggis Khan sought to accomplish two goals. The first was to establish a diverse bodyguard open to all, from the powerful and influential *tumen-u noyad* to the ordinary shepherd. Additionally, the recruitment process for the *keshik* served a practical need, as it functioned as an instrument of political control. By requesting the youngest son in addition to another son, Chinggis Khan essentially gained hostages. This practice was not exclusively used on his own commanders but was also used on conquered peoples. Often a prince or a relative of the vassal entered the *keshik*. However, Chinggis Khan and his successors were masters of realpolitik. They did not expect that the hostage would ensure good and loyal behavior by a far-off governor or client. Rather, they saw an opportunity to mold the younger sibling or hostage into a potential replacement for a vassal or commander who no longer conformed to their demands and expectations.

While service in the *keshik* prepared individuals for duty in the administration of the empire or as commanders of armies, the primary responsibility remained in guarding the khan. For this purpose, the guard was divided into three units: night guards (*kebte'ul*),

day guards (*turqa'ut*), and quiver bearers (*qorcin/qorcis*). During the *quriltai* of 1206, Chinggis Khan substantially increased the size of the *keshik*. The *kebte'ul* increased from 80 to 800 men, later increasing to 1,000 in 1206. The *qorchin* numbered 400 originally but were also increased to 1,000. Meanwhile, the *turqa'ud* increased from the initial 70 men to a total of 8,000. Not all of the guards served every day; they rotated every three days.

During the time of Chinggis Khan, Boroghul's unit served first, Borju's division served the second shift, Muqali's division served the third shift, and Cila'un served the final shift before the rotation came again. The command positions within the *keshik* were hereditary, but even those from a low rank over time could achieve a higher position.

In the context of the Mongol military, the *keshik* served as more than the khan's bodyguard. While the units of 100 and 1,000 were often led by officers of non-*keshikten* origin, the generals who led the armies of conquest rose from the ranks of the *keshik*. Because of the ties forged within the *keshik* and its focus on serving the khan, the Mongol commanders could operate effectively in the field and even in joint action with various princes without the khan fearing that rebellion might take place.

For the rest of the empire, the *keshik* continued as an institution even after the empire divided into four khanates. The size of the *keshik* did vary and change. In the Yuan Empire, at one point it numbered 12,000 and possibly continued to increase. While it rarely became a praetorian guard, it could and did exert undue influence during times of weak rulers.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Muqali; Yuan Empire; *Groups and Organizations:* Alans; *Military:* Subedei

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Khurasan

Khurasan is now divided among the modern-day countries of Iran, Afghanistan, and Turkmenistan. Until the modern era, it was a distinct region of northeastern Iran and contained the cities of Herat, Balkh, Nishapur, Tus, Mashad, Merv, and Nisa. Often the historic Khurasan is referred to as Greater Khurasan, albeit with its borders shifted, to avoid confusion with the modern-day Iranian province.

Khurasan became significant to the Mongols during their war with the Khwarazmian Empire. After Sultan Muhammad II Khwarazmshah fled Mawarannahr, he crossed the Amu Darya River and entered Khurasan. A task force led by the Mongol generals Jebe

and Subedei pursued. A number of cities submitted to them, agreeing to pay tribute and provide supplies. The two generals then continued their pursuit and departed Khurasan. Other commanders then entered the region, pillaging and mopping up any resistance. A few cities, including Nishapur, rebelled during this period. After devastating Mawarannahr, Chinggis Khan's forces entered modern-day Afghanistan at Tirmid, the same location the Soviets moved through in 1979. As Chinggis Khan conducted operations there, he sent his son Tolui into Khurasan in 1221–1222 to subdue the region.

Tolui's campaign was ruthless. He massacred the populations of Merv (in modern-day Turkmenistan) and Nishapur in retaliation for the death of a *guregen* (son-in-law) of Chinggis Khan. This was probably Toquchar (Tifjar in the Islamic sources), who had raided the vicinity of Nishapur after it submitted and in direct violation of Chinggis Khan's orders. While Toquchar was stripped of his command, his death still needed to be avenged. Tolui more than avenged it. Herat, in modern-day Afghanistan, also fell after a siege of eight months. After Tolui departed, it was said that Khurasan would not recover from the damage if 1,000 years passed.

Khurasan did recover and in a much shorter time. The Mongol armies departed the remnants of the Khwarazmian Empire in 1224, retaining only Mawarannahr. With their departure, Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah returned and sought to establish a new kingdom. His presence attracted Mongol attention, although this mainly consisted of raiding forces who accomplished little other than destruction. The main effort to bring Khurasan into the Mongol Empire took place in 1230, when Ogodei sent an army led by Chormaqan to deal with Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah. The region was brought under control, but by whom was a matter of contention between Chormaqan, Dayir (a lieutenant of Chormaqan), and Chin-Temur, the Mongol governor of Mawarannahr. As a result, there was a struggle among the three as to who should rule the region that became a struggle between the civil and military governments. In the end, Ogodei Khan decided in favor of the civil government.

With the shift to a civilian governor, the region became integrated into the Mongol Empire and ceased to be a frontier. During the reign of Ogodei it became part of a large fiscal region along with Mazandaran (south of the Caspian Sea), which bordered Khurasan. This demonstrated that the region had recovered from Tolui's invasion, as the revenues were sufficient to collect on a regular basis.

The region continued as a vital revenue district through the era of Mongke, but it became part of the domain of Hulegu as his army entered Iran to finish off the Assassins and the Abbasid Caliphate. He assigned his son Abaqa as the governor of the region. The region became a training ground for the heir apparent. While it was not guaranteed that Abaqa would be the il-khan's successor, the prince stationed there became, in effect, the Prince of Wales. Indeed, Ghazan and Oljeitu also served as viceroys in Khurasan before ascending the throne.

With the dissolution of the empire, Khurasan became a contested frontier between the Il-Khanate and the Chagatai Khanate. In addition to the prince, several generals were also stationed there. It is not always clear whether these were part of the prince's retinue or a separate army. The most substantial threat to Khurasan came with the invasion by Baraq, the Chagatai khan, in 1270. Abaqa defeated him at Herat. The next

substantial invasion came during the reign of Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), but periodic raids happened between those two invasions.

While the region maintained importance as a training ground for princes and as a border with a hostile power, it was also liminal to the Il-Khanate's capital of Tabriz. As a result, Khurasan was also a fertile ground for rebellion by princes, generals, and local notables. Ghazan's rebellion against Baidu originated from Khurasan. Ghazan had also been prevented from making a claim to the throne after the death of his father Arghun in 1289 as he dealt with a rebellion by Nawruz, a Mongol general also stationed in Khurasan. Oljeitu also dealt with a rebellion by the Karts, the ruling dynasty of Herat, as well as Mongol princes in the region during his reign. And finally, during Abu Said's reign, Khurasan once again became a hotbed of rebellion when Amir Chuban used the region as his base due to its vast resources. After his death in 1327, the turmoil continued until Abu Said was finally able to stamp it out in 1330. The region remained at peace until the end of the Il-Khanate in 1335.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Tabriz; *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; Il-Khanate; Mawarannahr; Transfer of Authority; *Individuals:* Abu Said; Ghazan; Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah; Oljeitu; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* The Assassins; *Military:* Chormaqan Noyan; *Key Places:* Abbasid Caliphate; Khwarazmian Empire

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Mahmud Yalavach (d. ca. 1262)

The second part of Mahmud Yalavach's name is probably a variant of Mongolian *elchi*, meaning “envoy, delegate,” pointing up his role as a representative of the Mongol central authority. He was a Khwarazmian official with an extremely long career, serving successive generations of Mongol rulers. Even before his death, perhaps in the early reign of Khubilai, his son Mas'ud Beg (d. 1280s) had become a power in his own right. Mas'ud was for a long time the most important Mongol official in Turkistan, later under the Chagatai Khanate and the interloper Qaidu, who controlled the Chagatai Khanate for a long period of time although leaving its practical day-to-day rule to Mas'ud Beg.

Mahmud, who is praised in *The Secret History of the Mongols* as one “knowing the proper way of cities,” may have begun his career as an official of the Kara-Khitans Empire and then began to serve the Mongols, who conquered the Kara-Khitans Empire and adapted many of its institutions to their own use. While a regional official in western Turkistan under Chinggis Khan, Mahmud is said to have resisted the incursions of Mongol princes, possibly including some from the House of Chagatai. His unpopularity with these princes may have been the reason Mahmud was transferred to China under Ogodei. Although this is uncertain, there Mahmud came to head the overall Mongol administration for conquered China as the chief *jarquchi*, *ulus* or patrimony adjudicator, stationed at the old Jin capital of Zhongdu. By this time Zhongdu was the center of Mongol administration there. Later, of course, the Yuan winter capital of Khanbaligh, or Daidu, was founded just north of the old site.

At that time Ogodei Khan (1229–1241) was attempting to completely reform the Mongol Empire. This included a regularized and rationalized tax structure in China, where the formal administration was organized regionally and headed by Confucian Khitan Yelu Chucai. Additionally, a series of censuses were conducted to find out who was where and in what numbers, and a coinage was created, including one for the Mongol capital of Karakorum proclaiming that that coinage was *tore*, the proper way of doing things. The coinage reform was less important for China, where even paper money was used. But our understanding of this may be changing. Mahmud, who already had a reputation for protecting the holdings of the central authority from his earlier service, like Yelu Chucai, fit right into this new kind of administration, hence his importance within it.

Mahmud’s post as *jarquchi* was not only a reflection of his importance for preserving the holdings of the Yeke Mongol *ulus*, the “Great Mongol Patrimony,” the totality of empire, which, by Mongol tradition, belonged to the entire imperial clan, but was also a reflection of the importance of booty distribution, including people and territories from new conquest. The census, headed in China by Chinggis Khan’s adopted son Shigi-Qutuqtu (ca. 1180–1262) representing the totality of the Mongol patrimony, was backed up by Mahmud and other officials representing the center and the direct interests of the khan even if they were also involved in larger issues as well.

After Ogodei, Mahmud too lost power in the less rational regime of Toregene khatun. She is said to have preferred tax farming and a maximization of revenues more than a fully rational system that preserved the sources of taxation. No later than the reign of Mongke (1251–1259), however, was he back in full power again, although not as the head of administration. In China the Zhongdu authority came under one Bujir, another *jarquchi*, who is well known from the inscriptions of the period. Whether Mahmud was actually subordinate to Bujir or not is unclear. Likely Bujir was of major importance because he represented Mongke in particular with the imperial administrations of the time, being composed of imperial appointees and others, many representing purely princely interests. The later province system of Mongol China developed out of such delegations, and similar structures existed elsewhere in the Mongolian world.

Mahmud continued in power through the reign of Mongke, although one late Mam-luk source reports his death in the mid-1250s. In fact, this claim contradicts substantial Chinese evidence. In 1260 when Khubilai took power, inheriting Mongol China, which

became his real power base, there was still a Mahmud in power in Zhongdu. This was almost certainly Mahmud Yalavach. If so, he was among those former imperial ministers easing the transition of Khubilai from his position as prince into that of ruler, even though his authority was at first opposed by others. Chinese sources suggest that Yalavach may have died about 1262, since references to Mahmud disappear in our sources at that time. He was probably in his 80s.

In conclusion, Mahmud was typical of the many officers with administrative talents drafted by the Mongols to administer a growing empire and not destroy its tax base in the process of exploitation of its resources. Khubilai's success in mobilizing Mongol China to fight off a succession of Central Asian competitors shows the very success of Mahmud and his ilk as administrators. Interestingly, the type of administration, with officials jointly representing various authorities and powers, not just the center, their primary concern, proved extremely influential not just in Yuan China but also subsequently. It was the origin of China's province system that still persists until the present day. And already before the end of empire China has not just its central administration in Zhongdu but local structures as well, for example, in what is now Yunnan. Later they were to proliferate and persist.

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See also: *Organization and Administration:* Ulu; Yelu Chucai; Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Kara Khitai; Zhongdu

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Mawarannahr

Mawarannahr, also known as Transoxiana, is an Arabic name meaning "the land across the river." The river that is referenced is currently known as the Amu Darya but in the medieval period was known as the Jihun. In classical sources and in the West it was (and sometimes still is) referred to as the Oxus River. More generally, it refers to the territory situated between the Amu Darya and Syr Darya Rivers, encompassing land that now comprises Uzbekistan, southern Kazakhstan, western Tajikistan, and south-eastern Kyrgyzstan.

The Mongols acquired Mawarannahr during the conquest of the Khwarazmian Empire after the Otrar Massacre in 1218. During this period the Mongols sacked the two major cities of the region, Samarkand and Bukhara, in a brilliant campaign, which took Chinggis Khan through the Karakum Desert in the western portion of Mawarannahr. By 1221, the entire region was firmly in Mongol hands. In 1224 when the Mongols withdrew from Central Asia to deal with the Tangut rebellion, the territory they retained was Mawarannahr.

After the withdrawal of the Mongols, Chin-Temur was named the *jaruqachi* (governor) of the region. During his tenure, he did raid across the Amu Darya and skirmish with Jalal al-Din Khwaramshah. Most of his attention, however, was on reviving the region. During the reign of Ogodei, the area became a distinct fiscal district even as the western portion was allotted to the *ulus* (patrimony) of Jochi. The majority, however, was assigned to Chagatai.

The region recovered economically from the Mongol invasions during the 1220s, but discontent still existed. In 1238, Bukhara revolted over taxes. Although Mawarannahr began as a separate fiscal district, over time the lands were increasingly given over to Chagatai Khan. The situation remained through Mongke's reign, but with the dissolution of the Mongol Empire, Mawarannahr became the center of warfare. As Alghu attempted to seize control of the Chagatai Khanate, he expanded his realm at the expense of the Golden Horde and Qaidu, a grandson of Ogodei. Alghu's demise in 1266 then permitted Qaidu to recover and push into Mawarannahr with Golden Horde assistance. Eventually the matter was resolved with the Peace of Qatwan, which stipulated a division of Mawarannahr as well as revenues from Samarkand and Bukhara.

Mawarannahr survived an Il-Khanid invasion in 1270, after Baraq's ill-fated invasion of Khurasan. Gradually the region stabilized, but for most of the existence of the Chagatai Khanate it was viewed as a region to exploit, both in taxes and pillage. The khan ruled from Moghulistan, but a prince governed Mawarannahr. During the reign of Kebek Khan (1319–1327) the situation changed, as he preferred Mawarannahr and gave preference to the sedentary and Muslim population of the region. The situation continued with Tarmashirin Khan (1331–1334), at least until his overthrow in 1334. The caravan trade flourished during his reign due to improving routes and relations with the sultanate of Delhi. After Tarmashirin's overthrow, however, the situation reverted to the previous status.

Mawarannahr remained tied to the Chagatai Khanate but almost as a colony to that which they exploited. In some ways, this was not radically different from the 13th century. Yet, there was a difference. While a Chagatayid prince sat on the throne in Mawarannahr, the Chagatayids in Moghulistan carried more importance and intervened in affairs of Mawarannahr when necessary. It was not uncommon for the Chagatayids to raid Mawarannahr simply to augment the taxes they extracted through more rational means. Unlike in the 13th century, however, a resistance to the Chagatayids emerged from among the non-Chinggisids.

In 1347 Kazghan, a Turkic commander, deposed Kazan Khan, the Chagatayid ruler of Mawarannahr. Kazghan then ruled Mawarannahr as his own kingdom but sent tribute to the Chagatayids in Moghulistan, who were viewed increasing as *jetes* (bandits),

to prevent retaliation. Eventually Kazghan ceased his tribute payments and acted increasingly without regard to the Chagatayids and promoted himself as an independent ruler.

As a result, Tughluk Temur Khan, the Chagatayid ruler, invaded. His invasion crushed Kazghan and brought Mawarannahr under his control. Although Tughluk Temur professed Islam, it is not clear if his religiosity was sincere or whether it was ploy to have some legitimacy in the eyes of the populace in Mawarannahr. Regardless, Tughluk Temur did not remain in the region for long and left his son Iyas to govern the region. The removal of Kazghan also opened the door for other personalities in the region to find opportunity. Kazghan had deftly kept a lid on the various leaders of the region. One such figure was Timur-i Leng (Tamerlane), who eventually took over the entire region and established himself as an independent ruler in 1370. Although he kept a Chinggisid on the throne, he defeated the Chagatayids on several occasions. Although Timur expanded his empire, Mawarannahr remained the centerpiece of the empire and was greatly enriched with the plunder of Asia.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Khurasan; Transfer of Authority; *Individuals:* Timur-i Leng; *Key Events:* Otrar Massacre; Peace of Qatwan; Tarmashirin, Overthrow of; *Key Places:* Khwarazmian Empire; *Primary Documents:* Document 10

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Moghulistan

Moghulistan is a Persian name that means "Place of the Mongols." Originally it was considered part of Turkestan (Place of the Turks), but as with many regions, the borders and names shifted over time. The name Turkestan began to be used to refer to Mawarannahr and parts of modern-day Xinjiang (East Turkestan in the 18th and 19th

centuries). In the 14th century, the western portion of the Chagatai Khanate became known as Moghulistan, referring not only to the Mongols as an ethnonym but also to those still living a pastoral nomadic lifestyle.

Comprising much of the former territory of the medieval kingdom of Kara Khitai, the region consisted of territory in modern-day Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Xinjiang in the People's Republic of China. The exact western border varied over time, with either the Syr Darya River or the Chu River in Kazakhstan serving as the boundary. The eastern borders reached deep into modern-day Xinjiang, although some dispute whether the territory south of the Tien Shan Mountains was truly part of Moghulistan or simply part of the Chagatai Khanate. Others consider the northern and southern borders to be marked by Lake Balkhash and the Tien Shan Mountains, respectively. In this interpretation, the region between the Tien Shan Mountains and the Kunlun Mountains comprised the region known as Altishahr (also known as the Tarim Basin), a Turkic name meaning "Six Cities" (Yarkand, Kashgar, Aksu, Yengi Hisar, Khotan, and Maralbashi).

Much of Moghulistan was originally part of the Ogodei's *ulus* (patrimony), with the westernmost portion belonging to Chagatai. Guyuk's favorite pastures were along the Emil River. The Ogodeyid branch of the Chinggisids lost much of Moghulistan during the Toluid Revolution. During the civil war between Ariq Boke and Khubilai Khan, the region was disputed. Qaidu was able to take advantage of the disorder to solidify his own claims to the region, although he also faced challenges from Alghu Khan (a Chagatayid). With Qaidu's death in 1301, the Chagatayids were able to absorb all of Moghulistan into their domains.

This became the preferred region of most of the Chagatayid khans (Kebek and Tarmashirin being the exceptions), as the steppes allowed them to be true to their nomadic origins. By the death of Tarmashirin Khan (r. 1331–1334), the Chagatai Khanate had split into two regions, Mawarannahr and Moghulistan. This is when the Islamic sources began to increasingly refer to the region as Moghulistan. It was not quite Mongolia, but in the eyes of those who dwelt in Mawarannahr, for all intents and purposes Moghulistan was truly the place of the Mongols, by which they meant nomads. Furthermore, it marked a religious border that predated the Mongol era. Moghulistan remained pagan with a sizable Buddhist population. Christians (even Catholics) existed along with Muslims, but the majority were shamanistic or Buddhist. While the sedentary population might have viewed them as nomads in perhaps a pejorative sense, the Mongols viewed this as a compliment and remained true to their ways. Indeed, they viewed themselves as stalwart protectors of the heritage of the Mongol Empire. Those who remained in the south and southwestern portions (Mawarannahr) converted to Islam over time. Although the cities remained Sunni, the nomads adopted Islam from Yasaviyya, Naqshbandiyya, and Kubraviyya Sufis. While the nomads existed in Mawarannahr, the commercial cities carried greater importance because of the lucrative wealth of the overland caravan routes.

Gradually the cities in the steppes began to dwindle and even disappear as the Chagatayids gave them short shrift. Additionally, the stability in the steppes began to break down, causing caravans to avoid trade routes that crossed through Moghulistan. The

THE MOGHUL EMPIRE AND MOGHULISTAN

Despite its name, the Moghul Empire (1526–1857) of India is not connected to Moghulistan. It was founded by Babur (1483–1530), who was descended from Timur-i Leng and from Chinggis Khan on his mother's side through a Chagatayid princess. Babur and other Timurids were driven out of Mawarannahr in 1501 by the Uzbeks. The Uzbeks were an offshoot of the Golden Horde and led by Muhammad Shaybani Khan, who was descended from Shayban, one of the sons of Jochi. In the 15th century, the Uzbeks began to encroach into Moghulistan and then into Mawarannahr.

Despite repeated efforts, Babur failed to retake Mawarannahr. He repeatedly raided India to fund his wars against the Uzbeks. Finally, however, the raids led to conquest. Although Babur and his descendants viewed themselves as Timurids, the population of India viewed them as Moghuls (Mongols), as they came from the north—revealing how deeply the Mongol raids from Afghanistan affected the psyche of India. Ironically, the Timurids had viewed the Uzbeks and other tribes beyond Mawarannahr as the Moghuls, but by fleeing Mawarannahr, they had become the Moghuls.

reason had to do with internal disorder among the Chagatayids but also with the rise of Timur-i Leng. Timur not only seized control of Mawarannahr and prevented the Chagatayids from reclaiming it but also invaded Moghulistan on occasion, seizing the Jetyssu or Seven Rivers (known as Semirechye in Russian). This area consists of the seven rivers that flow into Lake Balkhash. Additionally, Timur's destabilization of the Golden Horde set off a chain of events that led to offshoots of the Golden Horde encroaching into Chagatayid territories. Additionally, the rise of the Oirat confederation also led to the destruction of the Chagatayids and led Moghulistan to become the basis of new nomadic confederations such as the Oirat and the Kazakhs.

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See also: *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; Mawarannahr; *Individuals:* Chagatai Khan; Guyuk; Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Oirat; *Key Events:* Mongol Conversion to Islam; Toluid Revolution; *Key Places:* Kara Khitai

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Muqali (1170–1223)

Muqali, the Mongol most associated with the Mongol conquest of northern China, was a Jalayir and the son of Gu'un U'a. Around 1197 Muqali's grandfather and father were with the Jurchen when they were defeated by Chinggis Khan during the first stages of his rise to power. After this defeat, Gu'un U'a surrendered to the Mongol chieftain. He turned his two sons, Muqali and Buqa, over to his new master as hostages and personal slaves (*emcu bo'ol*). Despite his in theory low status, Muqali soon became a trusted retainer of Chinggis. Muqali became one of his Four Heroes (*dorben kulu'ud*) and actively participated in the steppe war of unification. He seems, for example, to have fought at Dalan Nemürges in 1202 against the Tatars. He later participated in campaigns against the Kereit and Naiman.

In 1206 after the great *quriltai* that elected Chinggis Khan to supreme power, Muqali became a myriarch and leader of the Mongol left wing. As such, he actively participated in the Mongol wars against the Jin dynasty in northern China. By 1211 when serious campaigning began, the tribal reservoir of what is now Inner Mongolia was firmly in Mongol hands. This was thanks to the great tribal uprising, mostly of Khitan, of 1207. By 1211, the targets of the Mongol advance were more inland and included local administrative centers such as Fuzhou, Xuande, and Dexing in what is now northern Hebei. A critical point, probably taken late in 1211, was Zhuyong Pass, directly on the route leading to the Jin Middle Capital, or Zhongdu.

At this time Mongol campaigns were still highly seasonal, and the advance against the Jin was anything but continuous, so Zhongdu was spared direct attack for two and a half more years. In 1212 there was a great raid into Shandong, and the Mongols became increasingly preoccupied with Manchuria, the area around the Liao River, a particular focus of Muqali's operations.

How the character of the Mongol advance in China had changed was nowhere better shown than in circumstances leading to the fall of the Jin Middle Capital in 1215. It was not Mongol armies that took the city but rather Khitan *juyin* units, auxiliary forces revolting against their Jin ruler and forcing him to flee. Samuqa, a Mongol general, led his army toward the former Jin capital, but his Khitan allies had already conquered it for him. It subsequently became the center of conquered northern China.

Muqali himself was not involved in the campaign and continued to be primarily occupied in Manchuria, although he conducted raids in other directions as well. In September 1217 he returned to Mongolia with his army. Chinggis Khan himself had already returned the previous year. By this time the khan's attention was more and more directed toward the Muslim west, toward the Khwarazmian Empire. To keep control of now extensive Mongol conquests in northern China, Muqali was made commander of a *tanma* (in late 1217 or early 1218), a nomadic garrison force for occupied China. He was given the titles *gui-ong* (dynastic prince), although there is some question as to the origins of this title, and *taishi* (grand preceptor), a Chinese title but known among the Mongols. Muqali also received a golden seal of authority and a white flag of nine tails with a black crescent in the center.

To back up his power, Muqali was given not only Mongol armies but a whole confederation of local allies. The Mongols under his command included 4,000 Ur'uds, 2,000 Ikires, 1,000 Mangqud, 3,000 Onggirad, and 2,000 Jalayir. There were also 1,000 assorted troops, probably consisting of the small *alginchi* units or advanced forces. Backing the Mongols up were Onggud forces from Inner Mongolia and various Khitan, Jurchen, Tangut, and Chinese forces. Altogether there were some 23,000 men in his force. They were concentrated, except for the *alginchi* units, as a reaction army focused on Inner Mongolia. The latter were spread throughout northern China as a trip wire. Their job was not to take cities or fight major opponents but simply to detect major opposition to which the main *tamma* armies could respond.

Armed with these forces and supported by many other allies not part of the *tamma* proper, Muqali was able to hold conquered northern China and continue Mongol operations there. Between the establishment of the *tamma* and Muqali's death in 1223, Jin was largely reduced to a rump state focused on its southern capital of Nanjing, the highly populated Chinese city of Kaifeng. This city the Mongols then lacked the siege experience to take. Also, another problem for them was the continued existence of Xi Xia, the Tangut kingdom in northern China, as an independent state. Its destruction required a special Mongol campaign under Chinggis Khan himself, his last, to subdue. Southern Song, now also a potential competitor, was alarmed by the growth of Mongol power.

Although the Jin were able to counterattack after Muqali's death, Mongol China continued to dominate much of the north, and the *tamma* armies continued in existence and gained in strength. Chinese and other local allies also grew in numbers, but further conquest had to be put off due to the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227, a two-year interregnum, and the need of the new ruler, Ogodei Khan, to harbor his resources.

In China, Muqali's son Bol inherited his command but died in 1228. His successor was Chila'un, a name that means "stone." Chila'un is also known in our sources as Tash, Turkic for "stone." This latter name was probably one of the taboo names used by the early Mongols. Muqali's family continued to be important in Mongol China down to the end of Mongol rule there.

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See also: *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; *Juyin;* Kereit; Naiman; Tatars; *Military:* *Alginchi;* *Tamma;* *Key Events:* *Quriltai* of 1206; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Khwarazmian Empire; Zhongdu

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Ordo

Ordo (*ordu*) is a term of Turkic origin that refers to the encampment formed by the grouping of an undetermined number of tents around a ruler or an important male or female member of the royal family. These camps were at the center of military and sociopolitical life of Central Asian nomads in general and the Mongols in particular. The itinerant characteristic of the Mongol court meant that there was no fixed location where the Mongol ruler could be found. This fact contributed to the function of the word (e.g., in Persian sources) as a synonym to refer to the royal court regardless of its geographical location. Consequently, when mentioning that someone was going to see the khan, sources generally say that this person "was going to the *ordo*."

The palace-tent of the royal family member around which the tents of his (or her) subordinates were pitched served as the central point from which social and family life was articulated among the Mongol nobility. It is difficult from the available sources to establish precisely the extent of these *ordos* or how many people they contained. In the early empire, we know from *The Secret History of the Mongols* that people belonging to



Ordo meant camp, but became a synonym for palace, often a luxurious and large yurt, or *ger*. In this Persian miniature, Chinggis is shown at his royal ordo, 14th century, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France. (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

groups different from that of the Mongols that were subjugated by the followers of Temujin were distributed among the *ordos* of Chinggis Khan's family, but figures, although provided, are difficult to verify. This practice of allocating conquered populations to different camps of the Mongol nobility was maintained during the years of the united empire and brought into Iran with Hulegu's conquest. The relationships between the noble in charge of the *ordo*, its subordinates, and other *ordos* made these encampments hubs of political, economic, and military power, becoming increasingly relevant in these areas as the empire grew and expanded.

Despite the socioeconomic and political relevance of the *ordos*, the sources reveal little about their internal structure and how the camps were organized. Foreign travelers in the Mongol Empire noticed that the rulers and their wives were accompanied in their *ordos* by pages, eunuchs, servants, military commanders, and a number of other attendants of both sexes, with specific people performing protocol duties of receiving visitors and embassies. The title *amir-ordo* sometimes refers to the person in charge of the administration of the encampment, but our image of this role remains unclear. Nevertheless, it is known that it became an important rank of the nobility, since Mongol rulers occasionally married their daughters to men holding this position and since daughters of some *amir-ordo* were married to Mongol rulers. This suggests that the position was sufficiently prestigious and the person was wealthy enough to become a desired ally for the royal family. Other agents are occasionally mentioned as being sent to collect taxes from distant lands or, at times, receiving orders from the khan or the khatun; however, no specific title is attached to them, which makes the reconstruction of the *ordo* administration a difficult task.

Economically speaking, the *ordos* were both the origin and destination of Mongol wealth. Horses, cattle, and precious treasures obtained from the Mongol conquest were accumulated in these camps, which in turn furthered the *ordo*'s function as a pole of attraction for merchants bringing luxury goods from around Asia to be sold to the newly rich (and increasingly richer) Mongol nobility. As the amount of wealth in the *ordos* rose, this institution became an important base for political power and a desirable target for plunder between opposing contenders to the throne. Looting of *ordos* is documented across the empire whenever a struggle for power occurred between different members of the royal family. For example, the *ordos* of Teguder Ahmad (d. 1284) and his wives were looted by Arghun's army after he seized control of the Il-Khanate, and Khubilai Khan also took for himself some of the *ordos* of the sons and wives of his brother Ariq Boke after defeating him in the fraternal wars that occurred in Mongolia during the mid-13th century.

Some women had their own *ordos*, which formed the foundations of their economic and political influence across the empire. It was noticed by Ibn Battuta that the *ordos* of the women (khatuns) traveled separately from those of their husbands, stressing the ownership and autonomy that these women had over their encampments and their inhabitants. Their *ordos* had similar characteristics to men's, but not all noble women could have an *ordo*. They needed to be married to a man of the royal family and, in ideal circumstances, give birth to a son. These ladies generally maintained their properties when they were widowed, and the *ordos* remained under their control even if they remarried. After they

died, the whole *ordo* would pass, in theory, to another woman, who would inherit the ownership of the camp, its property, and the people attached to it. The fate of these women's *ordos* was diverse and marked by the political circumstances of each Mongol khanate. For example, while we lose track of the majority of women's *ordos* in Iran in the 14th century, the *ordo* of Doquz Khatun (wife of Hulegu) was maintained as a women's *ordo* until the end of Mongol rule in Iran in 1335, with a succession of different women being named owners of the *ordo* after Doquz passed away almost 70 years earlier.

Bruno De Nicola

See also: *Government and Politics:* Titles; Women in the Court; *Individuals:* Doquz Khatun; Hulegu; Ibn Battuta; Khubilai Khan

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Qasar

Qasar was the second son of Yisugei and Hoelun and thus Chinggis Khan's eldest younger full brother and one of his ablest generals. Qasar was two years younger than Temujin (later Chinggis Khan). Qachi'un Elchi and Temuge Otchigin were Qasar's younger brothers, while Belgutei was his younger half brother. In the sources, Qasar was also called by his full name, Jochi Qasar, with "Jochi" meaning "guest" and "Qasar" meaning "wild beast." Different from his elder brother Temujin, who was skillful of the mind, Qasar was known as an excellent archer, a powerful warrior, and sometimes a good adviser and messenger. He was a loyal supporter of Temujin. He and Temujin murdered their common half brother Begter, Belgutei's elder full brother. Qasar also protected Temujin when the Tayichi'uds came to capture the latter and his family's property.

Chinggis Khan had complicated feelings toward Qasar. On one hand, he appreciated Qasar's loyalty. This was demonstrated when Ong Khan defeated Chinggis Khan. Qasar, who had joined Ong Khan, left his wife and sons in Ong Khan's camp and joined Chinggis Khan at Lake Baljuna. In the campaigns against the Kereit and the Naiman, Chinggis Khan won by relying on Qasar's strategy of feigned surrender and his charge of the central army (*qol*). The khan also entrusted Qasar with crucial tasks. Against the Jin Empire, Qasar captured the city of Dading and subdued Vuqanu (in Chinese, Puxian Wannu) of

the Jurchen in Manchuria. Correspondingly, Chinggis Khan rewarded Qasar well. In his first coronation, Chinggis Khan awarded Qasar his sword. After Chinggis Khan united Mongolia, Qasar was allotted 4,000 people, which is the highest amount among his brothers. Chinggis Khan also assigned Jebke to be Qasar's adviser.

On the other hand, Chinggis Khan gradually lost trust in Qasar. Qasar's plundering of the Onggirad, a Mongol ally, was a factor, but the main reason why Chinggis Khan gradually grew to distrust Qasar was likely the issue of succession, which became more serious as Chinggis Khan grew older. Qasar was also a son of Yisugei and Hoelun and, with his skill as an archer and a military leader, had the power and right to claim the throne after Chinggis Khan died. Chinggis Khan became most suspicious of Qasar's loyalty due to the slander of Kokochu Teb Tenggeri of the Qongqotan, the shaman trusted by Chinggis Khan. When Teb Tenggeri prophesied that Qasar could become the next khan, Chinggis Khan arrested his brother. Although their mother Hoelun shamed Chinggis Khan into sparing Qasar, Chinggis Khan clandestinely deprived him of 1,400 of his people. The friction between Qasar and Chinggis Khan depressed Hoelun and played a role in her untimely death. After his campaign against the Jin in Manchuria, Qasar is no longer mentioned in the Mongolian imperial historical sources. His death is not mentioned in these sources.

Among Qasar's descendants, only three of his sons are well known: Yegu, Tuqu, and Yisungge. In an edict by Chinggis Khan, only Yegu and Yisungge appear; Tuqu's name is missing. After Qasar died, his most respected son, Yegu, succeeded him. When Yegu passed away, his son Harqasun took his place. After Harqasun died, his uncle Yisungge led the Qasarid patrimony, which was located in northeastern Mongolia. Emegen inherited the place of his father Yisungge. While Chinggis Khan was dying in 1227, Yisungge was the only prince at his side. During the reigns of Mongke Khan and Khubilai Khan, Yisungge continued to lead the Qasarids and aided Khubilai in defeating Ariq Boke, Khubilai's younger brother and a contender for his throne. Yisungge also attended the *quriltai* (assembly) with Khubilai, supporting Khubilai's enthronement. However, Qasar's great grandson Siktur conspired with others to overthrow the rule of Khubilai Khan. After pacifying them, Khubilai Khan then executed them and dissolved their troops. In postimperial apocrypha, Qasar's offspring Tomolqu Ba'atur dispatched his son Qaji Kulug to lead 60 companions to save the last Yuan emperor, Toghon Temur.

Wei-chieh Tsai

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Hoelun; *Key Events:* Chinggis Khan, Death of; Teb Tenggeri, Death of

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Tamgha

The *tamgha* had many uses in Mongolian society. In terms of administration, it had a twofold function. The first was that it was the seal or stamp of office. The second function was that *tamgha* was also a commercial tax. When the Mongol Empire began, however, the *tamgha* was simply the brand or mark used to identify livestock. In a preliterate society, the *tamgha* could also serve as a signature of sorts. The use of *tamghas* predated the Mongols, and samples have been found from the Xiongnu era (ca. 250 BCE–200 CE).

As a brand, the *tamgha* usually was associated with a particular clan or even tribe. When a clan branched off or split, the new entity then modified the old *tamgha*. Thus, the old symbol was maintained even while taking a new form. Clans engraved the *tamgha* into rocks and trees, most likely to identify pastures. It was not uncommon to have the *tamgha* engraved into personal possessions such as knives or household materials. As the *tamgha* became associated with a particular tribe or clan, it also became associated with the leader of that group and thus became the symbol and possession of the aristocracy. Thus, the *tamgha* became something inherited by the sons.

As the Mongol Empire began to organize, the *tamgha* transformed from being a livestock brand and territorial marker to becoming a seal of state. It soon was not only used as a mark that indicated the khan's approval but also appeared on coins after the Mongols began to mint them.

Chinggis Khan used four *tamghas*. It is speculated that this reflects not only his own evolution as a ruler but also the fact that he represented all of the Mongol tribes in the new Yeke Monggol Ulus, or Great Mongol State (the Mongol Empire), and thus his *tamgha* needed to reflect that status. Two appear to be a sun, another resembles an X-shaped atom symbol, and the final resembles a bow and arrow with a curve or forked arrowhead. His sons based their *tamgha* on these, albeit modified. Jochi's stems from the *naran* (sun) *tamgha*, with his descendants then modifying it with each ruler. Ogo-dei used a bow with two dots between the curves of the bow and the string. He also used an "S" shape. His heirs appear to have used modified "S" shapes. Guyuk was the exception and used two circles attached by a vertical bar. Chagatai also used a *tamgha* that had a geometric design, with his heirs following suit by adding a stem and then modifying the stem with additional lines, dots, etc. Tolui's *tamgha* was a trident's head that was then incorporated into the *tamghas* of his sons.

Other officials also used *tamghas*. The use of a stamp or seal on documents was not a Mongol innovation, yet it became tied with legitimating their empire as one of law and order. When rulers submitted to the Mongols, they were given a *yarligh* (decree) that indicated the khan's approval as well as their own *tamgha* so that the orders the local notable issued were viewed in connection with the Mongol Empire. During Mongke's reign, he recalled all *tamghas* and issued new ones to end corruption, so apparently some counterfeit *tamghas* were in circulation. It is known that in the il-khan period, the color of ink used with the *tamgha* stamp indicated the status of an individual. Using the wrong-colored ink was a serious violation and could be punished with

death. Gold was the color of the il-khan, while vermilion or red was the color used by the great *wazir* and highest-ranking commanders. Black was used by lower-ranking officials. Blue ink was also used, although it is not certain who used this color.

As a tax, the *tamgha* was strictly a commercial or customs tax of approximately 5 percent of the value of the goods that a merchant carried. It was first implemented in northern China during the reign of Ogodei as part of the tax plan Yelu Chucai advocated, indicating that it, or a similar tax, had been in use in the Jin Empire and probably the Liao Empire. Gradually the tax was extended through the entire empire. This tax became known as the *tamgha* tax, as once a merchant paid the tax, he received a receipt with a *tamgha* stamped on it. This proved that the tax had been paid for those particular goods. The merchant could then travel throughout the empire and not pay any additional taxes on those goods, greatly reducing the cost of business.

Over time, the seal included words such as “By decree of Ogodei Khan,” usually in the Uyghur script and then later in Phags-pa. In the Golden Horde, the Chagatai Khanate, and the Il-Khanate, Arabic script became increasingly common not only with the conversion to Islam but also because Persian and Arabic were common languages among the population. This was particularly true with coins. Nonetheless, the *tamgha* symbols often found their way into the design.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Taxation; Tribe; Writing Systems; Yelu Chucai; *Individuals:* Chagatai Khan; Chinggis Khan; Guyuk; Jochi; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; Tolui Khan; *Objects and Artifacts:* Money

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Tammachi

A *tanmachi* or *tammachi*, a noun from the verb *tan+* meaning “to govern, control,” was technically a member or commander of a *tamma*. This was a nomadic garrison force of the type that was established for China in 1217 or 1218. In other locations it consisted of groups from the steppe combined with local elements. Its purpose was to constitute a reaction force stationed in an area where it could nomadize but still be positioned to intervene militarily if called upon. The *tamma* was also the basis for any large-scale campaign if there was a need for one. Thus, Muqali (d. 1223), the first commander of

the Chinese *tamma*, played a special role in large-scale Mongol campaigning in northern China, as did his successors, including the final campaign against the Jin and later wars against the Song. In addition to Muqali, other notable *tammachi* were Chormaqan, Dayir, and Baiju.

Also part of the *tamma* were certain miscellaneous elements, and these, unlike the *tamma* proper, in the case of China, positioned in what is now Inner Mongolia, were actually stationed in the conquered regions. In *The Secret History of the Mongols*, the members of these elements are called *alginchi* (scouts), those of the advance, those of the point. In 1217–1218 there were perhaps 1,000 of them formed into very small and very mobile forces stationed here and there, “like stars in the sky” in the words of one Chinese writer, at the forefront of the Mongol advance. And such scouts were not just found in China. We know that similar forces (called *tammachi*) existed as well in the Il-Khanate on the Seljuk border and probably were found throughout Mongol domains where such *alginchi* were an intrinsic part of Mongol strategy.

The purpose of the various forces of the *alginchi* was to provide a trip wire, a first response to trouble, although in their case the object when there was a major disturbance was to run rather than fight. The main *tamma* force was to do the real fighting along with local allies.

In Chinese sources, although the term is not correctly applied in Mongolian terms, these *alginchi* are almost universally called *tammachi*, and the term *alginchi* itself does not occur at all. These *alginchi* and their descendants, down to the end of the dynasty, are mentioned frequently in our sources and continued to be an element of occupation armies long after the main *tamma* had become less relevant with the regularization of the Mongol government system for China, now organized largely in Chinese terms. They may even have been added to with the advance into Song domains, although this is uncertain. More likely the existing groups, which may have grown in numbers by 1270 or so, were simply moved south, to a moving military frontier. In this respect the *alginchi* were much like the *gazi* warriors of the Islamic world, the *bozanchi* of the Ottomans.

What made these small forces special was their mobility and apparent free access to horses at a time when other Mongolian elements were finding access to an adequate number of horses problematic at best. This shortage was the main reason for the increasing importance of foot soldiers in Khubilai’s China after 1260, even Mongolian ones, and why his government had to force-purchase horses, particularly during the civil war against Ariq Boke (d. 1266). Khubilai was then cut off from traditional pasture areas and had to rely on China and immediately adjacent areas for his horses. Interestingly, these forced purchases yielded only moderate amounts of horses, numbers that were not up to need, thus resulting in Mongolian units of horsemen with too few horses to be tactically effective—that is, with each rider having multiple horses, a main horse and spares. Thus, we find a decreasing importance of mounted Mongolian shock troops as the advance into China continued.

Judging from the records of horse administration found in the collection *Dayuan mazheng ji* (Collection on Horse Administration of the Great Yuan) and documents surviving in the *Yongle dadian* (Great Encyclopedia of the Yongle [1403–1425] Period), the

major consumers of horses were the *tammachi* units. They clearly not only continued to hold and need large numbers of horses for military purposes but were specially protected or exempted by the government when it came time for forced purchases of horses. Only in the case of large herds belonging to individuals were some taken, as few as 1 out of 100. In this respect the *tammachi* were in the same situation as another major consumer of horses, the *yam* postal and communications system. Horses were specially purchased to support it as well, and *yam* units were never part of the forced-purchase effort.

Probably because of their comparative wealth as Mongols—that is, large numbers of livestock including horses—the descendants of the original *alginchi* or *tammachi* seem to have persisted even as the Mongol Empire in China collapsed. Although not identified as such, judging by location, the *tammachi* units were clearly among those left behind when the court fled Beijing for Mongolia. Some even were forced to become part of Ming armies.

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See also: *Organization and Administration:* Baiju; Il-Khanate; Muqali; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Military:* *Alginchi*; Chormaqan Noyan; *Tanma*; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Song Empire

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Taxation

Taxation is a necessary part of any state and funds the activities of the government, including not only the bureaucracy that manages the state but also the military. In addition, the taxes also pay for the infrastructure of the state. Regardless of whether one is discussing the United States or the Mongol Empire, taxes are a necessity. While the precise use and needs and methods of taxation vary, all states collect taxes, and the Mongol Empire was no exception.

Initially taxation was based on the herd size of the nomadic population, but as the Mongols expanded into sedentary realms with vast populations and different economies, the Mongol Empire had to adjust. For the most part, the Mongols simply adopted

methods already in use but gradually added their own forms while attempting to standardize the methods of taxing and collecting the funds. One method was to divide the empire into imperial fiscal districts. These had some semblance to the later patrimony khanates of the postdissolution empire, but there was considerable overlap to suggest that it was more coincidence than planning. By Guyuk's reign, the empire consisted of three revenue districts: northern China, Turkistan, and Khurasan-Mazandaran (that is northern and northeastern Iran). Each district was managed by a *daruqachi*, or governor. In 1257 the Rus' territories were also added, and Kitai, an Onggirad, was appointed as the *daruqachi*.

Prior to the establishment of a formal taxation system, the Mongols plundered their sedentary subjects. Gradually tribute was formalized, and payment came in the form of goods and services, which demonstrated subjection of an individual to an overlord, whereas a levy of money, goods, or manpower was extraordinary and used to fulfill a specific need. Eventually the Mongols set a tithe at approximately 10 percent of possessions, including men for the military or labor. Their application of decimal organization extended beyond military functions and into civil administration. Additionally, when on campaign, Mongol commanders demanded goods or levied what they needed from subjects, typically those they recently conquered. This was known as the *alba qubchiri*. The *alba qubchiri* differed in its application for nomads and sedentary populations.

During the reign of Ogodei, the taxation system became regularized, primarily due to the influence of the Khitan official, Yelu Chucai, and Mahmud Yalavach, a Central Asian. In 1235–1236, Yelu Chucai and Shigi Qutuqtu conducted a census of northern China. Yelu Chucai determined that this was the best method of demonstrating the importance of the sedentary population to his nomadic overlords. By providing a forecast of tax revenue for the khan, the Mongols saw the benefits of taxing rather than plundering. In Central Asia, Mahmud Yalavach adopted the reforms of Yelu Chucai of 1229, although preexisting systems also influenced his model. They continued to be used until 1239 or 1240, after which the Mongols transferred Mahmud Yalavach to northern China. Mahmud Yalavach's reforms, while similar to those of Yelu Chucai, differed in certain aspects and became the standard for most of the empire. Yalavach's system was based on *qubchir*, a poll tax on adult males that was paid in cash. This evolved from the system used by the Mongols for the nomadic population in which 1 animal was paid for every 100 owned. Yelu Chucai's version centered on households after the Chinese custom, although he did include a poll tax after 1236, perhaps due to Central Asian influence. In addition, another tax known as *qalan* also was imposed. This was often paid in kind rather than in cash.

Alba qubchiri, *qubchir*, and *qalan* were only three forms of regular taxation. Several irregular assessments also existed such as *taghar*, which was paid in grain to the military units in a particular area. *Mal*, Mongolian for "livestock" and possibly derived from an Arabic word meaning "property," was a requisition of livestock, although goods were also acceptable as well. Often the *mal* assessment provided horses for the *yam* stations as well as additional horses for the military. A final tax was *touzghou* or *tourghou*, which is bettered termed as tribute to the great khan. The *touzghou* collection consisted

not only of money, fine clothing, and jewelry but also livestock and any other item that might be considered suitable for the khan. It was paid yearly. Finally, there was the *tamgha* tax. *Tamgha* means “brand” or “seal.” Normally it would be used to indicate possession of livestock but also appeared on coins and state seals. Eventually it became a tariff or sales tax. Merchants who entered the empire would be assessed approximately 5 percent of the value of their goods. In return they received the *tamgha* (the mark of the emperor) to show that they had paid the tax. One could traverse the entire empire and only pay one tax, thus keeping commerce flowing and inexpensive.

By the mid-13th century, taxation was a combination of local taxes (whatever was used in that particular region) and new levies that were applied two or three times a year, often two or three years in advance. Mongke instituted reforms to end this practice. He created a new system to which all adults were subject. In addition, traditional taxes were paid. The new taxes included agricultural taxes, from which nomads were exempt, and duties on trade (the *tamgha*). One important aspect of these reforms was their further concentration of power at the imperial center, as regional princes were bypassed and revenue was collected by a representative of the central government. In theory, extraordinary collections didn’t happen. Mongke’s system formed the basis used by the other khanates after the split of the empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yelu Chucai; *Military:* Decimal Organization; *Objects and Artifacts:* Money

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Transfer of Authority

As part of the evolution of the civil administration, civil administrators gradually took control of conquered territories and incorporated them into the empire. Prior to the transfer of power from military control, usually under a *tammachi*, the conquered territory typically was haphazardly administered and usually for the benefit of the military forces in the region, not for the imperial court. It has not been clear how the transfer of power actually occurred, yet it is an important aspect of the development of the civil government.

Possible clues for understanding this process appear in the sources pertaining to a Chormaqan who was the first Mongol *tammachi* stationed in the Middle East.

Chormaqan is generally perceived as the de facto ruler of most of Iran as well as the Transcaucasia region. However, Chormaqan's power and sphere of influence became greatly reduced. The sources depict the reduction in his power through the machinations of civil administrators as well as the concern of Ogodei Khan. Yet analysis reveals that his reduction in power was part of a transferal of power and, more important, part of the development of the civil administration.

The true nature of events involve four principal participants: Chormaqan Noyan, general and conqueror of Iran and Transcaucasia; Chin-Temur, governor of Khwarazm; Dayir Noyan, a *tammachi* in Afghanistan and subordinate to Chormaqan; and Korguz, a civil administrator sent by Ogodei Khan to oversee the collection of taxes in Chormaqan's territory.

At the outset of Chormaqan's invasion of Iran in 1230, Chin-Temur was governor of Khurasan and Mawarannahr, but his claim to Khurasan was in name only, as Khurasan was unconquered. Chormaqan conquered Khurasan swiftly in 1231, but after he departed, lieutenants of Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah began a rebellion. While Chormaqan's troops quelled it, Chin-Temur complained to Ogodei that this was not thorough and would lapse into chaos as soon as Mongol troops departed. Chin-Temur then brought the territory under control peacefully and showed kindness. Those who did not surrender he captured by force.

Dayir and other lieutenants of Chormaqan, however, still sought to control the province and told Chin-Temur to depart. Chormaqan even ordered Chin-Temur to join him in western Iran. Chin-Temur then appealed to Ogodei, explaining that it was not until he arrived and remained in the region that peace actually took place in Khurasan. Ogodei approved Chin-Temur's rule in Khurasan and also the contested territory of Mazandaran (south of the Caspian Sea).

Thus Chormaqan's territory, which extended from the Amu Darya in the northwest to the Persian Gulf in the south to the Zagros Mountains in the southwest and to the Araxes River in the northwest, was greatly reduced. Chin-Temur may have claimed a right to rule Khurasan and Mazandaran due to conquest dating back to 1227, when he sent forces against Jalal al-Din. Chormaqan disagreed with this claim, as it is clear that until he crossed the Amu Darya, the Mongols did not have any armies stationed in Khurasan. However, Ogodei overruled and granted Chin-Temur a separate command.

The second reduction of Chormaqan's power began in 1235, with Chin-Temur's death. There was a brief power struggle between Chin-Temur's son, Edgu-Temur, and Korguz, a Uyghur, who was the chamberlain to Chin-Temur. Edgu-Temur was supported by Kul-Bolat and Nosal, the prime military figure in Chin-Temur's dominions. Korguz had the support of Chinqai and Ogodei, so he inevitably became the victor in that political struggle. Then Korguz received a *jarligh* (edict) from Ogodei to rule these territories as well as those conquered by Chormaqan. Korguz immediately moved in and began to tax the regions over Chormaqan's objections.

Thus, Chormaqan's power over taxation was reduced, a necessary step in curtailing the military power and increasing civil administrative power. Certainly the generals tended to be destructive, and to fulfill their military plans, they required large amounts of resources, especially in livestock, recruits, and raw materials. The commanders also

profited from their collection of resources. Thus, when the civil administrators took control, the military elite would naturally be displeased.

As has been discussed, the *tamma* was a key element in the early administrative structure as well as the military. This transition of power was part of the tsunami strategy of conquest. While an advance force caused a power vacuum in the neighboring regions, the *tamma* ruled the core of the recently conquered area. Gradually the region converted to a civil and bureaucratic government. The power vacuum and disturbances that the advance forces created in the outlying regions allowed this transition to occur. This is not to say that the military governors liked the fact that their power was reduced. It seems natural that they would protest, if only to prolong their positions or negotiate for compensation, as they remained in these regions for several years. By the time a civilian bureaucracy arrived, the conquered territory was relatively stable. Thus, the main difficulty was if local commanders were reluctant to relinquish their power. Once accomplished, however, only a garrison was needed to ensure that the laws were enforced and taxes were collected. To be sure, the majority of the garrisons consisted of local infantry, but a mobile horse archer cavalry reserve existed to deal with any major problems. This in turn allowed for the majority of the army to move on to the next conquest. Thus, when Korguz appeared, Chormaqan moved his headquarters from Rayy to the Mughan Plain region where, after he conquered it, it was in need of a *tamma* and opened the doors to Transcaucasia.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Khurasan; *Tanmachi;* *Individuals:* Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah; *Military:* Chormaqan Noyan; *Tamma;* *Tsunami Strategy*

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Tribe

Social organization was loose in Mongolia before Chinggis Khan. Judging from descriptions in *The Secret History of the Mongols*, the most ancient forms were based on one of two things, or both: brute force and often theoretical relationships of kinship in which largely fictitious groups were ranked in a complex hierarchy, one above the other or parallel to each other.

The Secret History also emphasizes the kinship connections of its actors. Duwasoqor, Dobun-mergen, Alan Goa, and Bodonchar were all direct ancestors of Chinggis Khan, and Alan Goa is even considered the ultimate ancestor of his Borjigin *oboq* (extended clan). This is one of two terms used again and again to explain relationships in *The Secret History*. It designates a patrilineal descent group—that is, a descent group determined by a male line—coming from a maximal ancestor, one positioned far in the past and one perhaps fictive, for example, the Gray Wolf that starts off *The Secret History*. An *oboq*, in turn, is contrasted to an *urugh*, a patrilineal descent group going back to a comparatively recent and well-known ancestor. The most famous one was the imperial (golden) Altan Urugh, with Chinggis Khan himself as the founder.

If we take *The Secret History* at face value, steppe society in the 12th century was primarily organized about such *oboqs* and *urughs*. The former included large groups such as the Kereit, the Merkit, the Naiman, etc., although, properly speaking, these were super-*oboqs*, united *oboq* groups. The *urugh* included the Kiyan, for example, of which Yesugei, Chinggis Khan's father, was a member, and a multitude of others. But was society actually organized in terms of *oboq* and *urugh* hierarchies, as suggested by *The Secret History*? In fact very little of it was, and *oboq* and *urugh* primarily pertained to the elite.

Members of this or that kinship group could cooperate with one another, and traditional association with *oboq* and *urugh* did determine where one could pasture livestock, but the real social units of early Mongolia consisted of herdsmen not actually related to the individuals held together by kinship at the highest levels. Below the Naiman or Kereit elite and their components, for example, were so many *bolok irgens* connected with elite *oboqs* and *urughs* in name only through their masters. Nonetheless, references to *oboq* and *urugh* did have real importance in two respects. One already mentioned involved the assignment of pastures. In addition, the Mongols practiced an extreme endogamy (marriage outside their kin groups), and thus it was important to know who your ancestors were and how you were connected with others.

The rest, unrelated individuals, did gain from a connection with elite *oboqs* and *urughs*, since they could herd if mastered by others with rights to territories. Commoners could also intermarry with their elite masters, since they were not technically related by kinship, an advantage to both sides.

The complicated system implied by all of this began to break down as the wars of unification reached a fever pitch in Mongolia toward the end of the 12th century. Many groups, such as the Kereit, Naiman, Merkit, and Tatars simply disappeared, broken up by the Mongols. By the time of Rashid al-Din in the early 14th century, they were little more than nostalgic legend. In the case of the Tatars, *The Secret History* speaks of a massacre of Tatars, all of those taller than the axle of a large yurt on wheels, but there were lots of Tatars still around circa 1200 and later. Their numbers were even sufficient to give the Mongols the name Tatar (Tartar in Northern Turkic) in Europe. Tatars still existed but not Tatars as a great super-*oboq*. Instead, new pragmatic tribal groupings had come into existence: chiefdoms. Their leaders still remembered their kinship connections, but such connections no longer reflected the functional organizational groups of society, at least in theory.

A key term in *The Secret History* is *gureèn*. A *gureèn* was basically a circle of herdsman wagons about a leader, appointed or confirmed by Chinggis Khan or some other steppe hegemon. This leader was a chief of a tightly organized tribal grouping in every sense of the word. No pretensions of kinship were maintained among and within such groups, and it was the khan who said where to nomadize, and territories were changeable. This was all the more so as the new Mongol Empire expanded and as groups were reassigned to new territories and were involved in the process of expansion itself. Later, after a time, an entirely new unit replaced the *gureèn*: the *mingan* (meaning “thousand”). A *mingan* was a military and social unit (including women and children) capable of putting, in theory, 1,000 warriors into the field. In no way were such units hierarchical socially; each was its own chiefdom with its own chief who did remember the old kinship links, since the chief governed marriage. This was as far as connections with an *oboq* or *urugh* now went except for the Altan Urugh, the imperial clan. The only social hierarchy was formed in terms of the *mingan* of the imperial bodyguard, which outranked the others.

The *mingan* was the effective tribal unit of empire and subsequently, in every way, became a basis for predatory expansion. Not only were these tribal units assigned, usually in groups, to princes of the blood to form their own holdings (*ulus*) and territories with, but the *mingan* also formed the basis of the nomadic garrison forces set up east and west, the *tamma*. These were often grouped as *myriarchies*, units of 10,000, but the *myriarchies* were tactical organizations and never social and tribal units in the way that the *mingan* was. It was the *mingan* that formed the tribal and thus social basis of the Mongolian society of the age of expansion.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kereit; Merkit; Naiman; *Key Events:* Alan Goa and the Arrow Parable; *Objects and Artifacts:* *The Secret History of the Mongols*

THE BOLOK IRGEN

A typical example of how tribes could be formed through force can be found with what was known as the *bolok irgen*, “a small isolated group of people.” Such a group was spied, for example, by mythical Mongol ancestor Duwa-soqor, who allegedly had a third eye in the middle of his forehead but could see long distances ahead (or rather the future), and his brother Dobun-mergen. Duwa-soqor spotted the *bolok irgen* as it moved upward on Tunggelik Creek. From them Dobun-mergen got his wife, Alan Goa. Later Bodonchar, born from Alan Goa after her husband’s death with a little help from a heavenly ray, a golden dog in some versions of the story, seized with the help of his brothers another such *bolok irgen*. He used them to form his own holding of herdsman. Since there is no hint that anyone in the group was related to him, brute force alone held the resulting group together.

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Ulus

The term *ulus* has changed through time. Today the term is used to mean “country” or “state.” For example, modern-day Mongolia’s proper name is “Mongol Uls,” with *uls* being the modern spelling of *ulus*. *Ulus* was also used to refer to the Mongol Empire as well, with the Mongols referring to the empire as the Yeke Monggol Ulus, or Great Mongol State. Additionally, *ulus* had other meanings within the Mongol Empire. Generally this referred to an appanage or patrimonial territory assigned to someone, usually a member of the imperial family. This included not only pastures and usually a geographically defined territory but could also include possessions beyond that particular territory, such as *inju* as well as people. The best-known *uluses* were those that Chinggis Khan assigned to his four sons, Jochi, Chagatai, Ogodei, and Tolui.

Jochi’s initial *ulus* was the western areas and eventually stretched as far west as the Mongol horses had traveled. Chaghatai’s was largely Turkestan, while Ogodei received territory roughly corresponding to the Naiman pastures on both sides of the Altai Mountains. Tolui received the rest of Mongolia. As the empire expanded, so did their respective *uluses*. Additionally, Chinggis Khan’s brothers had their own *ulus* as well.

Just as *uluses* could expand, they could also contract. The most well-known example was the reduction of the *ulus* of Ogodei during the Toluid Revolution. Other examples occurred as well. Initially, most of the Transcaucasia area and even Iran were viewed as part of the Jochid *ulus*. Mongke, however, assigned it to his brother Hulegu, perhaps in an attempt to limit Jochid influence or coming to the realization of just how much territory truly fell under the mandate of “as far west as the hooves of Mongol horses have trodden.” While the Jochids did not resist during the reign of Mongke, it became the *casus belli* of hostilities between the Golden Horde and the Il-Khanate. Additionally, Mongke’s expansion into China was to expand the *ulus* of Khubilai.

Yet the four *uluses* of Chinggis Khan’s sons were subdivided into smaller *uluses* as well. All of the grandsons of Chinggis Khan had their own *ulus* within their father’s *ulus*. Typically this consisted of a designated pasture area and perhaps revenues from certain towns. These varied in size and importance. The best example comes from the Jochid Ulus. While the term “Golden Horde” is often used to refer to the entire Jochid Ulus, it actually referred to the imperial seat of the *ulus* where Batu reigned. Orda, the eldest son, ruled another region, while Shayban (or Shiban) ruled another, etc.

Over time, *ulus* increasingly was used to refer to a territorial appanage such as those described above. Often the exact boundaries were fuzzy and poorly defined and only received firm borders through years of diplomacy and internecine warfare. There may have even been an idea that the four *uluses* were not meant to have set borders and that they should shift as the empire expanded, with Jochi's shifting ever westward as territory was conquered. If not, then Chaghtai's *ulus* could never grow, as it was hemmed in by the others, unless he expanded into India. Once Hulegu gained a *ulus* in the Middle East, even this possibility ended, at least for a few decades. Conflict between the Chagatayids and the Il-Khanate often concerned claims to territory in Khurasan and Afghanistan.

Yet while the fluid borders and geographic position may have been the intent, few were willing to concede excellent pasture areas. Gradually the *uluses* transformed into khanates. Of course, the dissolution of the empire hastened this. With the end of the Yeke Monggol Ulus, four new states emerged, and conflicts instantly appeared over territorial claims. At the same time, the conflicts were not over territory per se but rather the people and other resources (including pasture) that they held. Over time, though, the territorial borders became equally important.

By the end of the 13th century, the four khanates were not the same as the *uluses* parceled out by Chinggis Khan even if one disregards the disappearance of Ogodei's *ulus* and the creation of the Il-Khanate. All developed an administrative apparatus to govern, and the resources of a particular khanate were consolidated under the control of a smaller number of princes. What might have been a former *ulus* of one prince became a province or a district. For instance, in the Il-Khanate, Khurasan was a province that a prince might govern but was not a personal appanage. Naturally, some princes developed an affinity for certain lands, but it was not necessarily their territory, so to speak. Distinct *uluses* disappeared, as evidenced by those belonging to Jochi Qasar and Temuge, Chinggis Khan's brothers during the reign of Khubilai Khan. Furthermore, the practice of a prince's *ulus* including a town or craftsmen in a distant land was no longer practical even as the Mongols attempted to cling to that practice. Often revenues from those districts were not forwarded to their rightful owner, particularly in the 14th century. Nonetheless, the failure to do so often served as a rationalization for hostility even when it was not a direct cause. Through this process, the *ulus* ceased to be a patrimony or appanage and became a khanate.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics: Inju; Organization and Administration: Chagatai Khanate; Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Khurasan; Yuan Empire; Individuals: Chagatai Khan; Hulegu; Jochi; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; Tolui Khan*

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Writing Systems

When Chinggis Khan created his empire, he was illiterate. He quickly, however, came to appreciate the importance of literacy and not only ensured that his successors would be literate but also decreed that a writing system be developed for the Mongolian language. In addition to this system, often called Uyghur script or vertical Mongolian, the



Chinggis Khan (1164–1227) remained illiterate but commissioned a writing system for the Mongolian language. Appropriately, Chinggis Khan appears as the drawing that accompanies this Mongolian vertical-script poem. The poem is attributed to Chinggis Khan. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

Mongols used a number of other writings systems in their empire.

The first system used by the Mongols was the Uyghur script. Part of the plunder from the defeat of the Naiman included an individual named Tatar-Tong'a, a Uyghur scribe employed by the Naiman who became a tutor for the Mongol princes. Additionally, Tatar-Tong'a was charged with introducing literacy to the Mongols, including a script for Mongolian. The script itself was developed from Syriac and introduced into Central Asia through Nestorian Christian missionaries and Sogdian merchants, who also adopted it for their own Iranian language. The Uyghurs most likely adopted it from one of these sources and modified it. Although the Syriac script was written from right to left horizontally, the Uyghurs began to use it vertically in columns from left to right.

Because of the script's origins and their familiarity with the script, Uyghurs had little difficulty finding employment among the Mongols. The alphabet, however,

was used to write not only Uyghur but more specifically Mongolian. In adjusting to the new language, new letters were not added, so certain ambiguities arose, although a few concessions were made to indicate certain vowels. Further modification did not occur until the 17th century.

In addition to the Uyghur script, other writing systems were also prominent. Uyghur and Persian became the lingua franca of the Mongol Empire due to Uyghur being a Turkic language that could be understood by other Turks (not to mention the writing system). Persian became quite useful in the Iranian world, which also included Central Asia, as it had been the language of the bureaucracy prior to the Mongols. Persian was used throughout the empire, while Chinese was limited to Chinese-speaking areas. Using the Arabic alphabet, Persian included letters to produce phonemes that the original Arabic did not possess. In the 15th century and perhaps even in the 14th century it was adopted for Turkic languages. The written form of Turkic became known as Chagatai in Central Asia.

Other languages and writing systems remained in use as well, including Tangut and Khitan, although these gradually faded away. Armenian, Syriac, Korean, Georgian, and other languages were also used in their localities. The Mongols did not attempt to impose the vertical script on their subjects, although knowledge of it certainly opened opportunities for those who knew it. Many a Persian and Chinese bureaucrat lamented how the Uyghurs dominated the higher ranks of administration.

In 1269, Khubilai Khan commissioned the Tibetan monk Phagspa Lama to develop a single writing system for all of the languages in his empire. The request had much to do with some of the flaws of the Uyghur script, which could be ambiguous with certain letters such as “t” and “d” and vowels such as “a” and “e.” Furthermore, it was inadequate for writing Chinese names, which became a large problem as Khubilai’s armies conquered more and more of the Song Empire. Ever wary of being assimilated into Chinese culture, Khubilai did not want to simply adopt the Chinese character system as the new writing system for the Mongol Empire. He recognized the multiplicity of languages within his empire (as well as the other Mongols states), so a phonetic-based system, rather than an alphabet, had great appeal. Phagspa succeeded in his efforts. Basing what is known as Phags-pa script or Square Script on the Tibetan script (itself based on Sanskrit), the Phagspa Lama created a new writing system to suit the needs of the Yuan Empire. It remained a vertical script, unlike Tibetan, and was written in columns from left to right, thus making the adjustment from the Uyghur script easier.

Khubilai fully embraced the new system, ordering that it be implemented immediately and decreeing the creation of schools to teach it. It quickly came in use on *paizas*, seals, coins, and paper money. Despite this, the bureaucracy did not adopt it rapidly, and not only because of the learning curve. Many resented the switch and only reluctantly adopted it. Despite passive resistance, it became common throughout the Yuan Empire, and the other khanates had little reason to adopt it. Nonetheless, it was transmitted throughout the other khanates through other means, but translations accompanied it. What is notable is that many of the Phags-pa documents that are in existence today are not in Mongolian but instead are in Chinese, demonstrating that while the Mongol government may have eschewed the Chinese writing system, it sought to communicate in Chinese but on its own terms by using the Phags-pa script.

Despite the Yuan government's efforts to implement Phagpa over a period of almost 100 years, after the Mongol rule in China ended, the Phagpa script fell out of use. While it is not surprising that the Ming Empire used the traditional Chinese writing system, the Mongols also quickly abandoned the Phags-pa script and reverted back to the vertical Uyghur script, which remained in use in Mongolia until the Cyrillic alphabet was imposed in 1950.

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See also: *Government and Politics:* Paiza; *Individuals:* Chabi Khatun; Chinggis Khan; Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Khitan; Naiman; Nestorian Christians; Sakya Buddhists; Tangut; Uyghurs

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Yam

The *jam* (in Mongolian) or *yam* (in Turkic) was a postal relay station that linked every part of all the Mongol realms together and functioned as a crucial conduit for the brisk material and cultural exchanges between civilizations in the Mongol Empire. The main function of the *yam* was to deliver messengers, envoys, and materials from various provinces to the capital and vice versa safely and quickly. To this end, the *yams* were required to provide the carriers holding a tablet of requisition (*paiza/paizi*) and edict with relay mounts, provisions, and lodgings.

According to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, it was Ogodei Khan who founded the *yam* system in the Mongol Empire. Many other historical sources, however, lead us to a different picture; rudimentary postal systems were already working during Chinggis Khan's time. Likewise, *The Secret History* and several Persian sources give Ogodei full credit for installing post stations throughout the empire, yet fixed stations were not necessarily constructed in every region of the empire.

It seems certain that post stations were built throughout China and Mongolia from Ogodei's time on. As the Mongols expanded into northern China, they incorporated the preexisting Jin posts into their *yam* system. Afterward when they conquered the Southern Song, the Mongols' *yam* system further extended to southern China. Those posts in China were supported mainly by the Chinese post households, while civil households also paid a tax for the maintenance of the posts.

Three main postal roads connecting Mongolia with northern China are known. First, *morin jam* (horse station) was the eastern route linking Daidu, modern-day Beijing, to Karakorum via Shangdu and the Kerulen River; second, *tergen jam* (wagon

station) was the central route from Dadu to Karakorum by way of Fengzhou, modern-day Hohhot; and finally, *narin jam* (fine station) was the western route that went from Dadu up to Karakorum through Dongsheng, Ningxia, and Ejene. Although the exact task of each route is not clear, it is probable from the naming of the routes that the *morin* route consisted of horse relay posts, which were utilized mainly to move officials/ envoys; the *tergen* route was composed of relay posts for ox-drawn carts to transport sedentary materials from northern China to Mongolia; and the *narin* route aimed at sending confidential messages and precious goods directly to the great khan. These posts in Mongolia were maintained by Mongol nomads, and all the routes were probably constructed in 1235 by Ogodei.

However efficient the *yam* system was, abuse of *yams* by envoys/officials soon became rampant, and thus post households were seriously impoverished to the extent that they could not afford to fulfill their duties. To solve this problem, Khubilai Khan not only tightened control over the issuing of *paizas* and edicts but also bureaucratized the *yam* administration; as a result, in the great khans' realm, *yam*-related affairs came to be managed sometimes by the Ministry of War and at other times by the Bureau of Transmission. Moreover, by the end of Khubilai's reign, only relay mounts were prepared by the post households, while provisions and other costs were paid by the government.

Ghazan Khan reformed the postal system in the Il-Khanate so that the *yam* system there became very similar to that of the Yuan dynasty. Envoys now needed an edict issued by the khan bearing the khan's seal and indicating how many horses the envoy could obtain from *yams*; next, provisions and other necessities were paid for by the government, while the post households were required only to provide relay mounts; finally, imperial highways composed of fixed stations were constructed throughout the khanate.

Due to the scarcity of historical sources, it is not easy to elucidate the *yam* system in Central Asia and Russia. It is unlikely, however, that fixed post stations were built throughout these regions during Ogodei's time. The only place where fixed stations were installed at regular intervals was the northwestern side of the modern-day Zung-har Basin. This post road was constructed by Ogodei and connected his appanage to those of Chagatai and Batu. Besides this route, it was not post stations but nomadic encampments or villages that provided travelers with mounts and provisions in Central Asia and Russia during the early Mongol Empire.

This post road along the Zunghar Basin stopped working from 1276 to 1310 due to the turmoil in Central Asia between Qaidu and Khubilai. To offset this loss, Khubilai constructed alternative post roads along the northern slope of the Tianshan Mountains as well as the southern rim of the Tarim Basin. Once the Mongol khanates reached the grand reconciliation in 1304, the post roads in Central Asia recovered; furthermore, the post road along the Zunghar Basin was also resuscitated around 1310–1312. These postal roads in Central Asia were utilized extensively until 1347, when all the post roads in Central Asia collapsed. As for Russia, post roads were gradually constructed with fixed stations from about 1300, since the Mongols changed their administrative method in the Russian principalities from stationing resident agents (*darughas/basqaqs*) to sending envoys whenever they needed to collect taxes or tributes.

PRE-MONGOL ORIGINS OF THE YAM

The etymology of the term *yam* dates back to the period of Tuoba/Tabgach, who established the Northern Wei dynasty in northern China; in the Tuoba language, there was a word *ghiamchin* (post station staff) related to the Mongolian *jamuchin* with the same meaning. The term for relay horse, *ulagh*, was also witnessed during the Turk Khanate. This demonstrates that the postal system already had a long history in the nomadic or seminomadic areas before the Mongols adopted it.

On the other hand, the Mongols were influenced by the Chinese side as well. China also has a long tradition of an imperial postal system. Right before the Mongol conquest, each of the regimes based in northern China—the Northern Song, the Khitan Liao, and the Jurchen Jin—maintained a sophisticated system of imperial posts. The hospitality offered to official travelers perfectly matched the steppe culture; steppe rulers were expected to protect, lodge, feed, and entertain all guests. Therefore, it is plausibly concluded that the *yam* system was not the invention of the Mongols; rather, it originated from the compound influence of the two preceding traditions: the postal systems in the steppe and northern China.

Although it was a universal phenomenon that empires in human history constructed postal systems to ensure fast and safe delivery of information, the *yam* system of the Mongols was unique in terms of its unprecedented magnitude and its long-lasting influence. The *yam* system was established and managed by the Mongols quite homogeneously throughout their empire; as a result, it left similar imprints, to a considerable degree, in every subordinate area of the empire and even beyond, such as in Ming China, Muscovite Russia, and the Mamluk Sultanate.

Hosung Shim

See also: *Government and Politics: Paiza; Individuals: Ogodei Khan; Groups and Organizations: Ortoq*

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Yelu Chucai (1189–1243)

Yelu Chucai was a sinified Khitan and a traditional scholar who held important posts under Chinggis Khan (r. 1206–1227) and his son Ogodei Khan (r. 1229–1241). Originally Yelu held a minor post at the Jin court. He was also among those ministers left behind in Zhongdu in 1215, when the court abruptly abandoned that capital for a safer position, much farther south in Kaifeng behind the protecting flow of the Yellow River. Later in 1218, for reasons that are unclear but may have had to do with Mongol efforts to gain the support of the Khitan or Yelu's Buddhist connections, the young Khitan was summoned to see Chinggis Khan and was enlisted into the retinue of the khan. Yelu probably became a formal member of the imperial bodyguard. This is probably the time when he acquired his official post of *bichigchi*, officer in charge of documents, and became known as Urtu Saqal (Long Beard), a name that he is even called by in official documents. His specialty during the period was in managing the Chinese documents of the Mongols, which by then were becoming increasingly important. Yelu also served as an astrologer, a most important function in the Mongolia of the time.

When Chinggis Khan went west to attack Khwarazm, Yelu Chucai was among those accompanying him, remaining in the west until 1226. Among other things, Yelu translated for the Chinese Taoist sage Changchun "Eternal Spring," or Qiu Chuji (1148–1227), during the latter's 1223 visit with Chinggis Khan, who thought the Taoist a true immortal and was interested in how he himself might become one as well. The account of the journey of the Taoist to visit the khan was later written up by his disciple Li Zhichang in the *Xi youji* (Record of a Journey to the West), now one of our most important sources for its eyewitness account of the early Mongols. Later after Changchun's Taoists began to make trouble in northern China, including the expropriation of Buddhist properties, using the influence of their master with Chinggis Khan, Yelu Chucai wrote a countertreatise, his *Xiyou lu* (Entries on a Journey to the West). Subsequently, a long series of disputes developed between Buddhists and Taoists. Yelu became a Buddhist partisan, although he was dead before the Taoists were finally crushed under Kubilai Khan (r. 1260–1294).

Yelu Chucai continued to serve in the Mongol court government during the last years of Chinggis Khan's reign and during the regency of Tolui (1227–1229). With the election of the new khan, Ogodei, in 1229, Yelu became far more important both as a meritorious minister of Chinggis and because of Ogodei's new policies emphasizing systematic exploitation of the conquered domains, which by then were extensive and involved much more than just pillaging. This meant, in practical terms, censuses to find out who was where and in what numbers. Additionally, a formal highly organized and systematic taxation and a regular coinage system were implemented. The kinds of coins minted were above all directed at tax payments. All of this meant a greater use of records and more systematic record keeping. Highly literate individuals such as Yelu Chucai, with their traditional, formal Confucian educations, were not only of great use in maintaining the new system but were also vital to it.

TAXES OR PASTURE?

It is said that at one point during his reign, Mongol commanders attempted to persuade Ogodei that by exterminating most of the Han population, they could transform northern China into pastureland. Yelu Chucai convinced Ogodei that the plan was folly by showing him the tax income from the region. While this story is probably apocryphal and meant to demonstrate the need of a Confucian sage to advise the ruler, Yelu Chucai was put in charge of the tax offices in 10 districts set up by the Mongols to rule their direct imperial domains. Be that as it may, it is clear that he and his collaborators managed to turn what had been an irregular and unreliable flow of revenue into regular tax proceeds, a considerable achievement.

During this period, Yelu Chucai's spirit tablet, one of our fullest and most important sources for the period, makes him the effective head of Mongol administration and the chief of a supposed Chinese-style chancellery, but this is unlikely. And Mongol administration at the time simply did not work that way. In fact, we know that rather than being a major independent minister, Yelu had to have his documents approved by the bodyguard (*cherbi*) chamberlain, Chinqai (died 1252). It was Chinqai's superscription in Uyghur Mongolian that made them valid at all. In all, Yelu was also more likely the implementer of a broader policy already agreed upon rather than its originator.

As Ogodei went into decline, Yelu Chucai's power diminished. In particular, his rational and traditional way of raising revenues long typical of China rapidly lost out to tax farming, typical of Mongol domains the Muslim world. This was in part due to the need to produce greater and greater revenues to support an expanded Mongol administration.

Yelu Chucai was among those coming into conflict with Toregene, the primary wife of Ogodei and effective ruler of the Mongol Empire during the last years of Ogodei's reign and the interregnum that followed until the election of Guyuk Khan in 1246 (r. 1246–1248). Yelu's prestige as the former minister of Chinggis Khan saved him from any direct assault; he did not, for example, have to flee for his life. Yelu, however, never again enjoyed the kind of power and influence that he had enjoyed during the first years of Ogodei's reign.

Yelu Chucai's family continued to serve the Mongols after his death in 1243 so that family influence at least persisted. Also persisting was the myth of a Confucian scholar assisting a man on horseback, in this case Ogodei, to rule properly in the true Confucian manner even if, strictly speaking, the myth has little basis in fact.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Government and Politics:* Toregene Khatun; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Guyuk; Khubilai Khan; Ogodei Khan; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Sakya Buddhists; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Zhongdu; *Primary Documents:* Document 10

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Yuan Empire (1265–1368)

The Mongol conquest of China was gradual, taking nearly 75 years from the first raid on Xi Xia in the north, in 1205, until the final defeat of the Song dynasty, in 1279. Initial Mongol raids weren't based on conquest but instead were centered on gathering booty and intimidating enemies. However, with a growing list of allies, which in turn added to their list of enemies, the Mongols' goals changed.

Two forces drove this change. One was the internal changes within the Mongol Empire itself, in particular the rise not just of a military structure for conquest but one for government as well as conquest. This was particularly noteworthy under the khans Ogodei (r. 1229–1240) and Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), who created a true imperial structure involving a capital, provinces, censuses, revenue organizations, revenue officers, and even a regular coinage. Simultaneously with the emergence of a regular imperial structure in the Mongol world, Mongol connections with local powers in China, primarily numerous warlords, assumed increasing importance. These local allies and this phenomenon are particularly obvious in China. It encouraged not only Mongol conquest for the warlords to feather their own nests but also helped consolidate the conquests with their own local rule. Thus, Mongol China not only had many princely domains but also Chinese appanages such as that of Li Tan in Shandong.

Mongke Khan (1251–1259), the last ruler of a unified Mongol Empire, came to power through the Toluid Revolution. The House of Tolui, father of Mongke, came out on top, but instability now became the rule rather than the exception. Thus, the premature death of Mongke while campaigning in China led not to an orderly succession but instead to anarchy and civil war, which pitted Mongke's two brothers, Khubilai and Ariq Boke (d. 1266), against one another. Ariq Boke, who first held the advantage, positioned as he was in Mongolia and holding the Mongol capital of Karakorum, lost the struggle primarily because Khubilai was even better positioned in China, with its abundant resources, including Mongol troops.

By 1264 Ariq Boke was finished, but resistance to Khubilai's rule still existed primarily in Mongolia. Despite occasional revolts, he sought to claim the title of great khan, which is the supreme ruler of the Mongol world (his position was only recognized in Mongol Iran and briefly in Chagatayid domains). Becoming the de facto ruler of the Mongol state of northern China, Khubilai expanded south into Song domains, completing the conquest of the Song dynasty in 1279 after a climactic sea battle.

Not only was consolidation a physical consolidation, but it was also a necessary moral and intellectual consolidation. Khubilai and his advisers had to decide the political orientation of the new regime as a matter of urgency. Was it to be purely Mongolian, assimilating to Chinese values and even becoming a Chinese dynasty in the strictest sense of the word with Confucian ethical standards and valuation, or something else, a genuine fusion, a mixture of cultures and approaches to governing? What emerged was the latter. Da Yuan, the Chinese name for Khanate China, used after 1271 at the suggestion of imperial adviser Liu Bingzong (1216–1274), was ruled by a court primarily controlled by Mongols who nomadized with the Mongol ruler, including an imperial bodyguard structure and clan authorities to rule the Yuan Empire in the interests of the Mongolian royal house. It also had a Chinese structure, with a Chinese-style central government and Chinese local authorities and institutions. Yuan China also had many foreigners in its government and in other positions of influence. Not only did these foreigners make Persian, for example, a key lingua franca, but they also introduced Western techniques of government, including Khwarizmian-style tax farming. Such persons became inordinately influential in part because of a systematic discrimination against the majority Chinese, at least southerners (in the official legal system Nanren, as opposed to Hanren, or northerners), whom the Mongols simply did not trust at many levels of government.

Running throughout the Yuan structure was a sophisticated parallelism of double officers and double appointments. Mongol members of the imperial bodyguard, for example, while holding apparently lowly ranks such as quiver bearers or guards in the bodyguard, could also be appointed to quite high office in the Chinese sector of Yuan government, although their real power came from a hereditary bodyguard office. Also, throughout the Yuan system, imperial representatives, *daruqachis* (meaning “those pressing down”), supervised every level of administration. They were seconded by representatives of the clan authority in agencies such as the imperial clan administration, the *da zongzheng fu*, holding the post of *jarquchi*, adjudicator for *ulus* or national patrimony affairs. Most of the unique provinces of Mongol China, for example—and this was a real change in Chinese administrative history in having such units (administrative rule was rarely if ever so direct before Yuan)—were staffed primarily by *jarquchis*.

The result was that Yuan China was neither fish nor fowl but rather a sophisticated compromise allowing all the various vested interests to be represented and avoiding internal conflict as much as possible. But in creating such a system, Khubilai Khan not only created a government that persisted for more than 100 years but also changed Chinese tradition—no mean feat—in the process. China’s modern-day province system, for example, is a Yuan creation; and pieces of the Yuan military and even censorial system persisted under the Ming dynasty, which was a Chinese dynasty but had strong Mongolian roots as well.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Government and Politics:* Northern Yuan; *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Society; *Individuals:* Batu; Guyuk; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; Tolui Khan; *Key Events:* Toluid Revolution

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Yuan Society

Once the Mongols had completed their conquest of all of China in the late 1270s, they were faced with ruling the most culturally and economically advanced society in the world of that day. Managing any large state was a tall order for the very small group of Mongol warriors. But the situation in China was even more complex because the Mongol conquest had reunited the north for the first time in several hundred years with the south, which had never been outside of Chinese control. Because of that long history of separation and because it took the Mongols about 70 years to conquer all of China, social and political life was very different in the north and south.

Part of northern China had been ruled by nomads since the Tang state fell in 907. The last of those nomadic states was formed by the Jurchen in 1125, and it was their steppe empire that Chinggis Khan initially focused on conquering when he first entered northern China. Farther south, the Song dynasty remained the bastion of Chinese civilization. By the early 13th century, when the Mongols first invaded the north, Chinese lived side by side with non-Chinese, and people were used to a state that combined Chinese and nomadic elements and values. Thus, in some ways the Mongol conquest of the north was not as much of a shock to the local population as was the case when they eventually extended their control over the south. The Mongols were satisfied to hold the north for the next 20 years, and it was at that time that they devised the system of administrative categories that resulted in the separation of personnel from Central Asia (known as Semuren) from people who called the north home (Chinese, Jurchen, etc.).

Because the Mongols conquered northern China early, members of the Mongol ruling elite who opted to stay in China were given large areas of land to pasture their horses. Some Mongols wanted to turn the entire area of northern China into grazing land, and they did engage in wide-scale destruction when they first swept through the area in pursuit of the Jurchen ruling elite. They were talked out of that plan by Chinese and Jurchen advisers, who convinced them that they could make more money from the local population if they kept the farmers at work and made them pay taxes on what they raised. Because the estates given to the Mongol princes included peasant farmers and

villages, they became landlords with absolute control over the people who lived on their lands. This became an ongoing problem for the Mongol government's ability to collect taxes while at the same time maintaining the loyalty of the local population of farmers. Thus, when Chinggis Khan's grandson Khubilai completed the conquest of southern China in the 1270s, he ordered that Mongol princes not be given landed estates for their own use and that the local Chinese population not be harmed in any way. In fact, Khubilai's approach to China was much different than that of his predecessors, since he wished to revive Chinese governmental and social institutions as much as possible.

It is important to remember that it took the Mongols almost 70 years to conquer all of China and that the Mongols initially had no wish to reconstruct a Chinese-style state. Nor did many Mongols wish to settle down as administrators over people and lands they had conquered. Since the Jurchen state combined Chinese and nomadic people and institutions, the Mongols naturally continued to employ many Chinese and Jurchen as administrators on their behalf. They also brought in people from Central and Western Asia to perform civil and military roles. Northern China under the Mongols was a multiethnic society not so different from earlier times.

Khubilai reunited China only in the late 1270s after he conquered the Song dynasty, and things were quite different in the south. The Chinese were largely distrusted and excluded from important offices of government (but they were used to fill low-level local positions such as clerks). The south also saw more Chinese officials of the former Song state passively resist the Mongols by refusing to serve at all. Khubilai's reign also initiated important changes in how the Mongols understood China and its place in their empire. While Khubilai was acknowledged as the grand khan of the entire Mongol Empire, because he grew up surrounded by Chinese tutors and was interested in Chinese culture he shifted the center of the vast empire from the steppe down into China. One of the first things he did was to move the imperial capital down into north-east China, to present-day Beijing. He also created a dynastic title for his rule of China like previous Chinese emperors. He called the new dynasty "Yuan," a term taken from an ancient Chinese philosophical text that meant "origin of the universe." These actions ensured that the Chinese population, especially the important group of Chinese scholar-officials who used to run the government, understood that the Mongols were not enemies of China and the Chinese. Khubilai also encouraged the adoption of Chinese philosophical ideas by the population, and he created offices at his court to train Mongols in Chinese ideas and ways of conducting government.

China under the Mongols was a lively place, open to outside ideas and technologies. New medical, astronomical, and technological ideas were introduced. New forms of literature, painting, and performing arts became popular, and a new kind of Confucian thought was promoted. Some new religious traditions were also practiced on a wider scale than before, and Islam took hold in China thanks to the Mongol invasion. The Mongols, always interested in business, also promoted the use of paper money, credit institutions, and printed books. These were not new to China, but because China was now part of a global economic system, they became more important.

Michael C. Brose

See also: *Organization and Administration*: Yuan Empire; *Individuals*: Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations*: Jurchen; Semuren; *Key Places*: Song Empire; *Primary Documents*: Document 31

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INDIVIDUALS

OVERVIEW ESSAY

Considering the size and scope of the Mongol Empire, the task of discussing its key figures is daunting. Although only 4 khans ruled the united empire, the rulers of the Golden Horde, the Chagatai Khanate, the Yuan Empire, and the Il-Khanate increase the number of khans to a minimum of 61, and the number can exceed 100 individuals depending on when one marks the end of the Golden Horde and whether one includes the various regents who often reigned for multiple years. And this number does not even begin to include significant queens, princesses, sons, military commanders, bureaucrats, and opponents of the Mongol Empire. As a result, the following entries are a collection of people from all of these categories, with a focus on those figures who are mentioned most frequently or had a particularly remarkable role in the development of the Mongol Empire. Another factor in determining the inclusion of an individual is whether or not there is sufficient information to adequately discuss a particular individual in more than passing.

One cannot, of course, discuss the Mongol Empire without mentioning Chinggis Khan, the founder of the empire. He was truly one of the great men in history and as a result is the subject of numerous biographies of varying quality. Oddly enough, with the exception of Mongke Khan and Khubilai Khan, no other Mongol ruler has a biography, scholarly or popular. Guyuk has received renewed attention in one article, but Ogodei has largely been bypassed, with most attention given to his drinking and then the military campaigns conducted during his reign. His life, or rather reign, is most often an add-on to biographies of Chinggis Khan but not a true biography. Indeed, treating Ogodei's biography in this way is similar to the way his reign is included in *The Secret History of the Mongols*—it is an addendum, little else.

The other sons of Chinggis Khan have also received scant attention, partially because they were (and still are) overshadowed by their father. Additionally, very little is known of their lives before they began their military careers. Nonetheless, Jochi, Tolui, and Chagatai all merit individualized attention because their respective legacies had a long-lasting impact not only on the Mongol Empire but *also* on world history in general. Indeed, their personal interactions with each other and with Ogodei set the scene for many of the pivotal transformations of the Mongol Empire, including the question of who would rule the empire. Nonetheless, it is difficult to discuss them without including Chinggis Khan.

While not a khan of the unified empire, Batu, the son of Jochi, ruled the Golden Horde and played the role of kingmaker for the rise of Mongke. Of equal importance was the looming tension between Batu and Guyuk. These two items, however, often eclipse Batu's own achievements in establishing the Golden Horde as a functioning entity. Other Golden Horde rulers are omitted due to a paucity of information, although Uzbek Khan is discussed in the context of the "Government and Politics" section due to the political and governmental changes his reign ushered in.

Compared to the paucity of information concerning the rulers of the Golden Horde, there is a copious amount of data concerning the il-khans because many more sources from the Il-Khanate remain intact. Hulegu and his son and successor Abaqa can truly be considered the founders of the Il-Khanate. Ghazan also looms large in the history of the Il-Khanate both because he converted to Islam and made it the state religion and because he commissioned Rashid al-Din to write the *Jami'at al-Tawarikh* (Compendium of Chronicles), which is one of the most detailed historical sources of the Mongol Empire. Ghazan was succeeded by Oljeitu, who ensured that the conversion to Islam was sustained. The final il-khan was Abu Said, who reigned during the Golden Age of the Il-Khanate. Oddly enough, and despite his long reign, the Il-Khanate collapsed with his death for lack of an heir.

Only the Yuan Empire might be better documented among the postdissolution states. Most of the Yuan emperors, however, pale in comparison to the lengthy reign of Khubilai Khan. Additionally, most had relatively short reigns, excluding Toghon Temur, who is discussed in the "Government and Politics" section.

The Mongol khatuns (queens) stand apart in history. Much of their distinction stems from the difference between Mongolian culture and the other cultures the Mongols encountered. In Confucian, Islamic, and Christian cultures, women were largely relegated to a diminished role. Occasionally a woman might hold power, but this was notable often because of its rarity. It was more common, however, for women in these three societies to wield power behind the scenes, which Mongol queens could also do. The fact that the Mongol queens were so prominent is not surprising, considering the status of women in nomadic society. Although medieval Mongolian society was patriarchal, gender relations were still more egalitarian than those of sedentary societies simply due to the nature of life in the steppes. Men could be gone for days while hunting, herding, or at war, and thus women needed to take over the duties of men, which included fighting, hunting, etc. The queens ran their own camps (*ordos*) independently of their husbands and therefore had experience in managing large numbers and complex operations. As a result, many queens served as regents for the entire empire or for the regional khanates until a new khan could be chosen.

Two women in particular stand in the forefront: Borte and Hoelun. Hoelun, Chinggis Khan's mother, served as the example of the ideal Mongol woman in ability and function. Even as Chinggis Khan unified Mongolia, she did not hesitate to criticize him when needed or to offer advice. Borte, Chinggis Khan's primary wife, was similar in this respect. Even though Chinggis Khan had many wives, Borte's position in the hierarchy was never challenged. Her position and reputation only grew after her death.

Two women served as regents of the entire empire: Toregene and Oghul Qaimish. The entry on Toregene can be found in the “Government and Politics” section due to the changes she instituted in government as well as her political machinations. Oghul Qaimish, however, is discussed here along with Sorqoqtani, who was Oghul Qaimish’s contemporary and the powerful wife of Tolui. Sorqoqtani never ruled, but she became the paragon of womanhood among the Mongols, rivaling Hoelun and Borte in importance. Because Sorqoqtani was the mother of Mongke, Khubilai, and Hulegu, it is not surprising that the sources are profuse in their adoration of her. It would be easy to dismiss these sources as biased except that sources from outside the Mongol Empire also held her in high esteem.

Few women or men were elevated to the near saintly status of Sorqoqtani, but other notable women in the Mongol Empire came close. One such individual was Chabi, the wife of Khubilai Khan. She was instrumental in his rise to power but also had a profound influence on Khubilai in terms of religion. Doquz Khatun had a similar impact in the Il-Khanate. Originally a wife of Tolui, Doquz Khatun became Hulegu’s wife and accompanied him to the Middle East. Because Doquz Khatun was a Nestorian Christian, Christianity found great favor in the Il-Khanid court during Hulegu’s reign, even though Doquz Khatun also sponsored the building of mosques and Buddhist temples.

The last queen covered here is Orghina Khatun of the Chagatai Khanate. The chaotic nature of the Chagatai Khanate led to instability almost immediately after the death of Chagatai Khan. There was a brief moment when Orghina or Ergene, the wife of Chagatai’s grandson Qara Hulegu, ruled the khanate for a decade (1251–1260) as regent for her son Mubarak Shah. Orghina proved to be an able administrator as well as a shrewd politician, successfully navigating the civil wars that came with the dissolution of the Mongol Empire. In many ways, she stabilized the Chagatai Khanate during this rocky transition even when she no longer wielded power. Her ability to influence events from the sidelines demonstrated her abilities perhaps even more so than her actions as regent for her young son.

When studying history, it is important not to dismiss the influence of figures from outside of a given state or empire. The Mongol Empire is no exception. In the early phases of the Mongol Empire, the most notable opponent of the empire was Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah, the last sultan of the Khwarazmian Empire. He is notable not only because during his reign he attempted to establish a new state while opposing the Mongols but also because his ineptitude in diplomacy doomed his state as much as his military ability attracted Mongol concerns that he might actually pose a threat to their rule.

Whereas Jalal al-Din proved to be an ephemeral thorn, Baybars, sultan of the Mamluk Sultanate, proved to be much more dangerous. A gifted commander, Baybars could hold his own against the Mongols on the battlefield, just as Jalal al-Din could. However, unlike Jalal al-Din, Baybars was also a consummate diplomat, able to negotiate treaties that harmed his opponents while benefiting himself. Furthermore, he was prudent in his choices, only engaging the Il-Khanate on his own terms and whittling away its clients when the il-khan was occupied elsewhere. His actions were impressive by any standard, but when one considers that he did this while simultaneously jockeying the literally cutthroat world of Mamluk politics, one must rank him as one of the greatest

leaders in world history even though relatively few people today know the name Baybars.

A third individual, Timur-i Leng, must also be considered. It is difficult to ascertain if Amir Timur was an opponent of the Mongols or a successor. On one hand, he took over Mawarannhar and then conquered the chaotic successors of the Il-Khanate in what appeared to be an attempt to restore the Mongol Empire. Although not a Chingisid, he used Mongol institutions and maintained the pretense of keeping a Mongol khan on the throne. At the same time, he was drawn into the civil wars of the Golden Horde. Although his protégé Toqtamysh won the war, the subsequent rivalry between Timur and Toqtamysh led to another war. While Timur may have sought to revive Mongol rule in Central Asia and the Middle East, he was directly responsible for undermining Mongol rule in the Pontic and Caspian steppes. Although the Golden Horde did not collapse, it was on life support.

The last individual included in this section is Ibn Battuta. Originally from North Africa, Ibn Battuta traveled throughout all of the Mongol Empire in the 14th century and probably logged more miles than the Venetian traveler Marco Polo. Indeed, there are numerous English translations of Polo's *Travels* but only a handful of excellent translations of Ibn Battuta. Although overshadowed by Marco Polo, Ibn Battuta demonstrated, perhaps even more so than Marco Polo, that men of ability could find employment in the Mongol world. Furthermore, while one may question his accuracy, he also provides an excellent glimpse of the Mongol Empire during the Pax Mongolica and truly compares the four khanates from a single witness.

This sampling of important figures provides a glimpse of the variety of personalities who shaped the Mongol Empire. As indicated, entries on other important individuals are located in other sections, such as "Government and Politics" and "Military." Those individuals included here demonstrate not only their own importance within the Mongol Empire but also how historians of the empire have emphasized them.

Abaqa (r. 1265–1282)

Abaqa was the eldest son and first heir to Hulegu (d. 1265), the founder of the Il-Khanate. Little is known about Abaqa's early life except that he accompanied his father's armies west from Mongolia into the Middle East, arriving in 1256. In December 1262 when war broke out between Hulegu and his cousin Berke, the ruler of the Golden Horde, Abaqa reinforced the Il-Khanid troops fighting in the Transcaucasus. He was forced to retreat with the rest of the Il-Khanid army when, after initial successes, Berke mounted a powerful counterattack in January 1263. He was subsequently named viceroy of Khurasan, with jurisdiction over all of eastern Iran and Afghanistan and parts of Turkmenistan and Pakistan. From there, he mounted an attack on the region of Khwarazm in the east of the Golden Horde before returning to summer pastures in Mazandaran. It was there that he received the news of Hulegu's death in February 1264, at which point his father's chief wife, Doquz, and his senior commanders summoned Abaqa back to Azerbaijan to assume the throne.

Abaqa spent most his reign consolidating il-khan rule over the Mongol-held territories in the Middle East. At the time of his accession the Il-Khanate was still at war with the Golden Horde, and Berke Khan sought to capitalize on Hulegu's death by mounting a fresh campaign to claim the Transcaucasus. Abaqa received word of his coming and dispatched an army, which successfully defeated Berke, forcing him to retreat behind the Kura River in modern-day Georgia. Abaqa suffered two further invasions of his realm: in 1270 by the Chagatai khan Baraq and in 1277 by the Mamluk sultan Malik al-Zahir Rukn al-Din Baybars. He successfully defended his realm against both of these attacks and even managed to launch retaliatory raids, including a failed attempt to conquer the Levant in 1281.

In addition to fending off foreign invasions, Abaqa managed tensions between his Mongol commanders and the increasingly Persian bureaucratic elite. Their hostility crystallized around a confrontation between Abaqa's powerful chief minister (*sahib diwan*), Shams al-Din Muhammad Juvaini, and one of the latter's protégés, Majd al-Mulk Yazdi. Majd al-Mulk had become jealous of the dominance of the Juvaini family over the civil administration of the empire and sought to discredit them by alleging that they had embezzled revenue from the treasury. Several Mongol commanders supported his claims to stamp their authority over the fiscal administration of the provinces under their control. Faced with these allegations, Abaqa remained staunchly loyal to Shams al-Din Juvaini yet also understood the need to placate his military leaders, so he granted Majd al-Mulk oversight of the civil administration of his realm. The solution was not ideal, since it perpetuated the rivalry between the two factions until the end of his reign. Nevertheless, Abaqa's government was praised as a source of justice and prosperity by both the Mongol military aristocracy and later Persian writers.

Abaqa remained nominally subordinate to his uncle, Khubilai, who acceded to the rule of the divided Mongol Empire shortly before Hulegu's death. During his coronation Abaqa refused to be seated upon the throne of his father until he had obtained Khubilai's consent. Abaqa also deferred to Khubilai on his coinage, which bore the inscription "The coinage of Abaqa, in the name of Khaqan [i.e., Khubilai]." Moreover, Abaqa invoked the authority of the great khan in his correspondence with foreign rulers by beginning his letters with the prefatory formula "by the virtue of the Living God, and the power of the Khaqan." Khubilai was not only the great khan but also the *aqqa* (senior) of the Toluid line of Chinggis Khan's descendants, and Abaqa and his heirs were obliged to show him deference until his death in 1294.

Abaqa's reign was a period of increased cultural exchange between the Mongol court and its Iranian subjects. A palace constructed by Abaqa near Lake Urumiya named Takht-i Sulayman (Throne of Solomon) employed a mix of East Asian and Middle Eastern motifs, including passages and images from the Persian Book of Kings, the *Shahnama*, as well as floral patterns and pictures of dragons designed by Chinese artists at the Il-Khanid court. Indeed, it was under Abaqa's rule that the first Persian history listing the Mongols as an Iranian dynasty was published, hinting strongly at the growing syncretism between eastern and western political and cultural traditions at the Il-Khanid court.

Abaqa's reign was also notable for the level of engagement that he sought with Europe in the hopes of inducing the Latin powers to join him in a joint attack on

Mamluk-ruled Palestine. Shortly after coming to the throne, Abaqa wrote twice to Pope Clement and Jaime I of Aragon promising to send troops to aid them in a proposed eighth crusade against Egypt. Further letters in 1270 saw Abaqa coordinate with future king Edward I of England, who sailed with an army from Tunis to Palestine to support the Il-Khanid invasion. Edward's forces were modest, and an army sent by Abaqa to link up with him was quickly deflected by a larger Mamluk contingent near al-Bira. Following this misadventure, Abaqa dispatched envoys to the Papal Council of Lyons in 1274, where they voluntarily underwent baptism and reiterated their master's desire to drive the Mamluks from the Levant. Subsequent embassies sent in 1276–1277 and 1280 bore no further fruit, and Abaqa died early in 1282, having failed to achieve meaningful support from his European allies.

The cause of Abaqa's death remains contentious. Several Persian sources state that he died of alcohol poisoning, causing him to hallucinate before losing consciousness. Others assert that Abaqa was poisoned by his chief minister, Shams al-Din Juvaini, who had grown weary of Majd al-Mulk's campaign to depose him. These claims of regicide are supported by the fact that Abaqa's eldest son and eventual successor, Arghun, accused Juvaini of killing his father and had the latter executed shortly after assuming the throne in 1284.

Michael Hope

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Khurasan; *Individuals:* Hulegu; Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks

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Abu Said (r. 1317–1335)

With the death of the il-khan Oljeitu, his son Abu Said (1305–1335) came to the throne at the age of 12. He was the sole surviving heir of Oljeitu, as his brothers had died previously. Due to his youth, the real power, however, rested with Amir Chuban, the leading Il-Khanid military commander. Abu Said's reign is often considered a golden age for the Il-Khanate, but there was little indication that this would be the case as his reign began.

A major change in the Il-Khanate occurred in July 1318 with Abu Sa'id the execution of Rashid al-Din after decades of loyal service. He had been accused of poisoning Oljeitu. Rashid al-Din denied this but admitted prescribing a laxative as he sought to



Abu Said speaks to a gathering in Najran. Miniature from the “Assembly” of Al-Hariri of Basra, 1335. Despite ruling in what was the Golden Age of the Il-Khanate, Abu Said failed to produce a male heir, leading to the collapse of his kingdom after his death as his commanders all vied to put their own Chinggisid candidates on the throne. (Pictures from History/ Bridgeman Images)

purge Oljeitu of his ailment. Although he had served Ghazan and Oljeitu faithfully, he was not immune to intrigue, particularly against rivals jealous of his success.

Abu Said then faced a rebellion in the east and an invasion by Uzbek Khan of the Golden Horde in Transcaucasia in 1319. The rebellion was crushed quickly, but the Golden Horde proved to be more difficult. Uzbek defeated the teenage Abu Said, as many of his commanders fled the battle. Fortunately, Chuban arrived with reinforcements and defeated the Uzbeks in a second battle. After being chastised by Chuban, many of those commanders later rebelled and sought to overthrow Abu Said but were defeated.

Having secured his rule, Abu Said then secured a peace treaty in 1322 with the Mamluks, bringing an end to a conflict that began in 1260. Although peace was achieved, tensions remained as Abu Said, a powerful Muslim ruler, projected influence into the region. His intentions of going on the hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, and sending the *kiswa*, or black cloth that covered the Kaaba, worried the Mamluks due to concerns that his presence could undermine their control of the holy cities of Mecca and Medina. These were diplomatic issues, however, and the peace held for the rest of Abu Said's reign.

Internal intrigue, however, did not diminish. Abu Said was no longer a 12-year-old boy. He achieved peace with the Mamluk Sultanate when he was in his early 20s and chafed in the shadow of Chuban. Chuban's authority, however, rested not only with the military but also because he married Abu Said's sister Sati Beg. Additionally, Chuban had effectively parceled out governorships to his family; thus, little could be done to curb his power. Even though Chuban's son Timur-Tash had rebelled in Anatolia in 1322, Chuban quelled the rebellion but pardoned his son. Abu Said had good reason to limit Chuban's power, but the question was how.

Abu Said disliked Chuban's son (not Sati Beg's) Dimashq Khwaja. Thus, Chuban ignored complaints presented to him concerning Dimashq's behavior at court, particularly as Dimashq had infiltrated the royal harem. The final break, however, came as a result of Abu Said's infatuation with Chuban's daughter (not Sati Beg's) Baghdad Khatun, who was married to another amir. Chuban would not support a divorce, which deepened the rift. Consumed with his desire for Baghdad Khatun and his loathing of Dimashq, Abu Said had Dimashq assassinated in 1327. Abu Said then issued orders to commanders loyal to him (or at least jealous of the Chubanids) to eradicate Chuban and his sons. Chuban attempted to reconcile with his former ward. When mediation failed he began to march against the il-khan but found himself deserted by much of his army. Although he was powerful and could often ignore the wishes of the ruler, the rank and file remained loyal to the il-khan. Chuban fled to Herat in Khurasan. The Kartid dynasty, which ruled Herat, refused to support the rebellion, having only recently regained the favor of the il-khans in 1327. Chuban was captured and executed. Timur-Tash then fled to the Mamluk Sultanate but was executed in 1328, and his head was sent to Abu Said as a demonstration of goodwill. Most of Chuban's other relatives were also purged or imprisoned.

Abu Said now married Baghdad Khatun and made Rashid al-Din's son, Ghiyath al-Din, his *wazir*. Abu Said also elevated Sheikh Husayn, Baghdad Khatun's former husband, to commander of the armies (Chuban's former position) as compensation. Abu Said continued to deal with intrigue, but overall the Il-Khanate prospered as commerce flourished. In many ways, his reign was the golden age of the Il-Khanate in terms of stability in the last decade of his rule. It proved to be ephemeral, however, due to a Golden Horde invasion. Abu Said promptly rode to meet the invasion but died en route. It was rumored that Baghdad Khatun poisoned him, jealous over the attention he showed her niece Delshad (Dimashq's daughter).

The sources portray Abu Said as handsome and cultured with skill as a musician. He not only knew Mongolian but also wrote Persian poetry. Additionally, he was well versed in Sunni Islam, which benefited him when achieving peace with the Mamluk Sultanate. Unfortunately, he lacked a male heir, and no other Chinggisids proved to be strong enough in the Il-Khanate to seize power. While military commanders vied to find a Chinggisid to raise to the throne, they also fought to ensure that their candidate would be the ruler. This pretense lasted only months, however, as the senior commanders dispensed with the charade and began to rule in their own name. Thus, the Il-Khanate rapidly disintegrated into small powers dominated by Il-Khanid military commanders, including the sons of Chuban, and local dynasties all vied for power.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Uzbek Khan; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Khurasan; *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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Batu (1203–1255)

One of the many sons of Jochi (d. 1225), the eldest but perhaps illegitimate son of Chinggis Khan, Batu (1203–1255) became one of the most influential and powerful figures in the Mongol Empire. As it was rumored that the father of Jochi was not Chinggis Khan but a Merkit prince who had kidnapped Borte, Chinggis Khan's wife, none of Jochi's sons had a legitimate chance of ruling the empire. Nonetheless, Chinggis Khan recognized Jochi as his son, and thus his heirs still played a role in the empire.

The territory of the Jochids, as the descendants of Jochi were known, was theoretically as far west as the Mongols had traveled. In the 1220s, a Mongol army led by Subedei had reached the Black Sea. Effective Mongol control, however, only extended to the Aral Sea. The rest of it was in the hands of the Bulgars, who controlled much of the Volga River; the nomadic Kipchak Turks, who controlled the steppe lands between the Caspian and Black Seas; and finally the Russian principalities.

Serious efforts to claim it for the Jochid branch of the Mongols began in 1234 when Ogodei Khan, the ruler of the Mongol Empire after Chinggis Khan, ordered its conquest. He specifically announced that the conquered territory was for the Jochids. To lead the campaign, he recalled the great general Subedei from the final stages of the war against the Jin Empire. Batu was named as the nominal commander of the army, which consisted of approximately 150,000 men.

The army departed in February 1236. While Batu led one part of the army against the city of Bulgar, Subedei marched against the Kipchaks. Bulghar fell in 1236, and most of the Kipchaks submitted to the Mongols later that year. This brought the present-day Volga–Ural River Basins under Mongol control.

In the winter of 1237, the Mongols invaded northeastern Russia. Ryazan fell in December. From there, the Mongols quickly overran Vladimir and other cities. An early spring thaw in March 1238 spared Novgorod from attack. Nonetheless, the Novgorodians saw the wisdom in submitting to the Mongols rather than risking an attack. Batu then overran southern Russia, storming the great city of Kiev in December 1240. The

Mongols then rested for the duration of the winter before invading Hungary and Poland.

The Mongols invaded Europe in 1241; while Batu and Subedei led most of the Mongol army into Hungary, another army invaded Poland. The Mongols won successive victories at Liegnitz and over the Hungarians at Mohi. The Mongols also raided deep into the Balkans and near Vienna. All of Europe trembled before an impending attack that never appeared, as the Mongols suddenly disappeared behind the Carpathian Mountains when they received word of Ogodei Khan's death in 1241.

The fact that Guyuk, who had served during part of the campaign before being sent to Ogodei in disgrace, was a contender for the throne complicated the issue. The cause of Guyuk's dismissal was that he disparaged Batu's ability as a commander. A livid Ogodei almost had his son executed; however, Ogodei died before any punishment could be meted out. Once in power, Guyuk intended to wage war against Batu. Batu led his forces back to the Volga River, where he made his camp. Here the city of Sarai would be built, which served as Batu's capital. Batu then watched and waited for the outcome of the election of a new leader.

Unfortunately for Batu, Guyuk (1246–1248) was elected. The war never occurred, however, as Guyuk died in 1248. Afterward Batu, now the most senior-ranking prince in the empire, became engaged in politics. Knowing that he could never be khan, he assisted Sorqoqtani in orchestrating the election of Mongke, the son of Tolui and Sorqoqtani, in 1251. As Mongke served on the Western Campaign and proved his worth, Batu gave his support. In return for Batu's support, Mongke gave Batu almost complete autonomy in the west. Batu then spent the remainder of his life ruling his kingdom from Sarai and making the region that would later be known as the Golden Horde a major power for the next 200 years.

Even before this, during the regencies of Toregene, Guyuk's mother, Batu exercised considerable authority in the western regions of the empire, even beyond his own domains. He sent his agents into Iran, Georgia, and Armenia to exercise authority in gathering taxes and administering the empire. After Mongke's election, Batu also contributed a large contingent of troops to the campaign. Although he possessed autonomy, Batu never challenged Mongke and cooperated with him in maintaining the empire.

During his lifetime, Batu was recognized as a capable leader and as one of the most influential princes within the empire. His performance as a military leader, however, is questionable. It appears that most of the successes on the Western Campaign had more to do with Subedei and other commanders and princes than with Batu. Nonetheless, the record of his rule demonstrates his capability as a ruler. Sarai and other regions of his territory thrived with commerce and recovered from the destruction of the conquest. After his death in 1255, he was awarded with the title Sayin Khan (Good Khan). His son Sartaq (1255–1256) and his grandson Ulaghchi (1256–1257) succeeded him, but both died early, possibly poisoned by Batu's brother, Berke. Despite the line of succession moving to Berke, Batu's name and career remained intact as the founder of what became the Golden Horde.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Sarai; Toregene Khatun; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Individuals:* Borte; Chinggis Khan; Guyuk; Jochi; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; Merkit; *Key Events:* Europe, Invasion of; *Military:* Liegnitz, Battle of; Mohi, Battle of; *Key Places:* Jin Empire

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Baybars I (1223–1277)

Rukn al-Din Baybars al-Bunduqdari (r. 1260–1277) was the most successful and perhaps most brilliant of the Mamluk sultans of Egypt and Syria. Brought into the Middle East as a slave, he emerged as a fierce opponent of the crusaders and the kingdom of Cilicia. In addition, he successfully defended Syria against the Mongols.

Baybars was a by-product of the Mongol conquest of the Pontic and Caspian steppes. Although many of the Kipchak Turks who inhabited the region were incorporated into the Mongol armies, others were sold to Italian slave traders, who took them to the slave markets of the Middle East. Many became the slave soldiers known as Mamluks. One such individual was Baybars, who was taken from Crimea in approximately 1243 and sold in the markets of Aleppo. He was purchased by agents of Sultan al-Salih Ayyub (r. 1240–1249) at a relatively low price due to a white spot on his eye and was stationed in Egypt.

As a Mamluk, Baybars received intensive military training on a daily basis and was enrolled in the Bahri regiment, so named as its barracks was situated on an island in the Nile, that rallied Ayyubid forces against King Louis IX's Seventh Crusade (1248–1254). The Bahri Mamluks routed the Knights Templar in street fighting in Mansurah (1250) and then organized the counterattack that eventually ended the Seventh Crusade with the capture of almost the entire crusading army, including King Louis.

Baybars emerged as a significant leader in the turbulence that wracked Egypt after the defeat of King Louis in 1250 and the rise of the Mamluk Sultanate. Nonetheless, Baybars found himself on the losing end of a power struggle. In 1254 most of the Bahri, including Baybars, fled Egypt and entered the service of other Ayyubid princes in Syria.

Baybars eventually returned to Egypt and was welcomed, but only due to the looming Mongol threat. Even as the Mongols besieged Aleppo in 1259, Baybars urged the Ayyubid prince to attack the Mongols, but Sultan al-Nasir's indecisiveness caused Baybars to



Baybars (al-Malik al-Zahir Rukn al-Din Baibars al-Bunduqdari, 1223–July 1, 1277) was a Mamluk sultan of Egypt. He led troops against King Louis IX of France, defeating the Seventh Crusade. Baybars also led the vanguard of the Mamluk army at the Battle of Ayn Jalut in 1260, which marked the first substantial defeat of the Mongol Army and is considered a turning point in history. His reign marked the start of an age of Mamluk dominance in the eastern Mediterranean and solidified the durability of their military system. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

support. He provided patronage to the religious elite, scholars, and mosques. The most important effort he made to establish legitimacy was by defending Dar al-Islam.

Against the Mongols, Baybars planned a defensive war. If the Mongols invaded, he fought them and tried to keep them from penetrating deep into Syria. He burned the pastureland on his side of the Euphrates River, which served as the border, and increased the fortifications so that troops would be near to meet any Mongol invasion. This delayed Mongols long enough for Baybars to reinforce any site. Baybars also carried out offensive measures against Mongol vassals, most notably the Armenian kingdom of Cilicia and the Principality of Antioch, the latter being a crusader kingdom. Bohemund VI (r. 1251–1275) of Antioch and Tripoli was the son-in-law of King Hethum (r. 1226–1270) of Cilicia, and both had submitted to the Mongols prior to the Mongol invasion of the Middle East in 1256.

depart his service and join the new Mamluk leader, Qutuz (r. 1260), in resisting the Mongols. This turned out to be a wise decision on Baybars's part, as the Mongols captured al-Nasir in Nablus after he had abandoned Damascus to the Mongols.

Rather than waiting for the Mongols to arrive in Egypt, Qutuz decided to attack them in 1260. With Baybars commanding the vanguard, Qutuz defeated the Mongols at Ayn Jalut in modern-day Israel. As a reward for his service, Baybars hoped to receive Aleppo, but Qutuz did not trust him and preferred to keep him close. This turned out to be a poor decision for Qutuz. While returning to Cairo, Baybars and other Bahriyya amirs murdered Qutuz.

With Qutuz's death, Baybars ascended the Mamluk throne as the ruler of Egypt and Syria. His ascension as al-Zahir (the Victorious) Baybars was not without dispute, and for the rest of his career Baybars had to deal with threats. Although he favored the Bahriyya, he gave due recognition to other groups to gain their sup-

BAYBARS'S MILITARY REFORMS

During Baybars's reign, the training of the Mamluks became institutionalized and standardized. Baybars also expected his men to be in peak physical shape as well, which was also reflected in the training. He set achievement levels that soldiers had to attain before moving on to the next level. For instance, a Mamluk had to master the art of drawing a bow 1,000 times before he was allowed to shoot a single arrow. He also incorporated strength-building exercises such as cutting layers of felt with a sword and then clay and even iron. Soldiers had to demonstrate varying levels of horsemanship both as individuals and as units. Although later sultans allowed the disciplined training to slip over the decades after Baybars's death, during his reign the Mamluks were probably the best warriors of the medieval period—able to fight the Knights Templar, Hospitaller, and Teutonic toe to toe while also competing with the Mongols as horse archers.

Baybars successfully captured Antioch in 1268. The Mamluk sultan also devastated Cilicia with a series of raids that included the capture of Hethum's sons. In these attacks, Baybars also showed uncommon pragmatism. He only attacked the vassals of the Mongols when he was certain that Mongol forces were not near so he could withdraw safely while his armies were bogged down with plunder. He achieved this by forming an alliance with Berke, the Mongol ruler of the so-called Golden Horde. Faced with the threat from the north, the Il-Khanid forces rarely had troops to spare for the defense of their client states.

Baybars ruled from the saddle rather than Cairo as he tirelessly marched to deal with beduin rebellions in upper Egypt in 1262 and rebellions in Syria by people who saw the Mamluks as regicides. To establish his credibility as a prosecutor of the jihad, Baybars captured several crusader strongholds. It is also clear that he carried out these attacks to prevent alliances from forming between the Il-Khanate and the crusaders. Through these he deprived them of a number of cities and fortresses.

Baybars transformed the Mamluk Sultanate into a major power, but he also contributed to its instability by usurping the throne in such a violent manner. Although he sought to establish a dynasty, after his death in 1277 his son and heir also fell victim to a coup. Indeed, almost all rulers came to power by killing their predecessor. Peaceful dynastic succession was rare.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks; *Military:* Ayn Jalut, Battle of; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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Borte (ca. 1161–1230)

Borte Fujin of the Onggirad tribe was the daughter of Dei Sechen. She served as the first and principal wife of Temujin, who eventually gained the title of Chinggis Khan as the founder of the Mongol Empire. Well respected among the Mongols, Borte acted as the first khatun of the empire. As mother to the Chinggisid heirs, her sons Jochi, Chagatai, Ogodei, and Tolui inherited their father's imperial legacy. Borte also gave birth to several daughters who contributed to the stability of the empire, as they represented the imperial families' presence in conquered territories.

Borte's parents arranged her engagement to Temujin, the future ruler, at the age of 10. At this time Temujin lived with her family to work for them as bride price payment. Temujin left the service of Borte's family early, forced to return home prematurely due to the illness and death of his father Yisugei (d. 1171). After a period of separation and much adversity, they eventually married when Borte was in her teens. Shortly thereafter, a Merkit tribesman abducted Borte and took her as a wife. Nomadic warriors in Inner Asia during this period commonly obtained wives via kidnapping within the context of warfare and raiding. Remarkably, Chinggis Khan rescued Borte from Merkit captivity with the assistance of the Kereit chief Toghriq Ong Khan (d. 1203). However, continued Merkit treachery led to their extermination as well as the capture and enslavement of their women by the Mongols. This began a period of warfare among the steppe tribes that eventually led to the consolidation of neighboring pastoral nomadic groups and the establishment of the Mongol Empire. With the establishment of the empire, Borte became the first Mongol empress. The descendants of her sons Jochi (1181–1227) and Chagatai (1183–1241) succeeded as the rulers of various territorial divisions of the empire, while the descendants of her sons Ogodei (1186–1241) and Tolui (1192–1231) succeeded to the imperial throne.

The Onggirad tribe, from which Borte descended, promoted the notion that political marriages between tribes ensured friendly relations. They believed that it was their daughters' duty to act as intercessors on their behalf. In this tradition, Borte served as an active adviser to her husband and trained her daughters in this same fashion. They acted as representatives, diplomats, and active participants in the affairs of state. Borte's role as a khatun was typical for an elite Mongol woman, and she used her position to influence her husband for the greater good. While elite Mongol women were subject to arranged marriages for the purpose of political alliances, their roles went beyond the production of heirs and cementing intertribal family alliances. Their activities encompassed other important functions as well. They managed key trade routes along the Silk Road and operated as confidantes and advisers. For example, on Borte's advice, Chinggis Khan

separated from his sworn friend Jamuqa (d. 1206) and struck out on his own when their alliance soured. Borte also insisted that the insolent shaman Teb Tenggeri should be challenged and defeated. As a result, Teb Tenggeri's back was broken for insulting Chinggis Khan's youngest brother Temuge Otchigin. In this case, Chinggis Khan followed Borte's advice, restored order among the people, and reinforced his authority. Much like her mother-in-law, Hoelun, Borte took in orphans, such as Qutqu Noyan and Buda Noyan, and raised them as her own sons. This bolstered her reputation as a mother figure and as an example of Mongol womanhood as the empire's first khatun, or queen.

Borte became legendary among the Mongols as the maternal founder of the Chinggisid lineage, whose heirs ruled the empire. However, internal family conflicts surfaced when the paternity of Borte's firstborn son was questioned. She was possibly impregnated by a Merkit captor, so Chinggis Khan was probably not Jochi's biological father. Chagatai often chided his brother Jochi regarding his questionable paternity. Yet Borte's reputation remained intact, since sexual fidelity did not define a woman's honor when connected with instances of abduction, warfare, or force. The Mongols considered such situations quite different from willful adultery, an offense that was punishable by death. To this end, Chinggis Khan sternly admonished his son Chagatai for insulting both Borte and Jochi with insinuations of paternal illegitimacy. However, due to their constant brotherly quarrels, Chinggis Khan chose Ogodei as his successor, since he was often able to smooth over disagreements and ensure peace between his brothers. While none of Jochi's descendants obtained the highest position of authority as the great khan of the empire, they founded and ruled over the Golden Horde in the western regions of the empire.

Overall, very little is known about the details of Borte's life. However, she held a prominent place in the early history of the Mongol Empire along with Chinggis Khan's own mother, Hoelun. Both Hoelun and Borte represented strong-willed women who suffered the indignities of kidnapping and forced marriages; they took great pains in raising their biological and adopted children. They actively supported the efforts of Chinggis Khan in the establishment and early expansion of the Mongol Empire. Although best known as the primary wife of Chinggis Khan, Borte earned a revered position among the early Mongols who advised Chinggis Khan as he struggled to unite the nomadic tribes of Inner Asia and found the Mongol Empire.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Individuals:* Chagatai Khan; Chinggis Khan; Hoelun; Jochi; Ogodei Khan; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Onggirad; *Key Events:* Teb Tenggeri, Death of

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Chabi Khatun (d. 1281)

Chabi Khatun, second wife of Khubilai Khan (1215–1294), the fifth ruler of the Mongol Empire, was descended from the Onggirad tribe and was the daughter of Elchi Noyan. Her husband Khubilai Khan founded the Yuan dynasty in East Asia, officially proclaimed in 1271. They reigned from their new capital of Daidu, also known as Khanbaliq and made famous in the writings of Marco Polo. As Khubilai Khan's favorite and principal wife, Chabi's children were heirs to the throne. A staunch promoter of Tibetan Buddhism at the Yuan court, she encouraged her husband in the study of Tibetan Buddhism. She also acted as an influential adviser to her husband and freely gave her opinions on political, social, and military matters. Her role as empress was not limited to promoting Mongol causes, as she often considered the needs of the conquered sedentary population as well as those of the vanquished Song royal family. Her reputation as the mother of the Yuan dynasty was so great that she was compared to Borte, the wife of Chinggis Khan, whose children also took precedence over those of other wives. Khubilai Khan, greatly affected by her death, suffered from failing health and never recovered fully from her loss.

Chabi Khatun advised her husband during a tumultuous period when various members of the imperial family struggled to decide who would ultimately rule the empire. As Khubilai Khan battled his brother Ariq Boke for control and authority, Chabi Khatun urged her husband to take military action. Khubilai Khan eventually defeated Ariq Boke. However, Yuan power was limited. It only effectively extended from China to the Mongolian homelands in Inner and Central Asia. Although Khubilai Khan technically held the title of great khan that endowed him with authority over the other portions of the empire, the Il-Khanate and the Golden Horde effectively ruled as independent khanates. As competition and power struggles within the extended imperial family escalated during this period, divisions emerged in the administration of the Mongol Empire.

Under the leadership of Khubilai Khan, the Yuan Khanate became somewhat removed from its nomadic cultural roots as officials struggled to maintain legitimacy in Chinese territories. In tandem, Chabi Khatun turned her attentions toward placating the needs of the commoners and sedentary populations under Yuan rule. For example, she rallied against proposals to depopulate and enclose territories near the capital for use as pasturelands for horses. She deemed it an injustice to the people who were already settled there. Chabi's arguments against this proposal silenced Khubilai Khan on the subject, and he followed his wife's advice. Chabi Khatun put aside the concerns of Mongol pastoral traditions when they were in conflict with the needs of the sedentary populations who lived near the Yuan capital. Her actions served to bolster the reputation of the emperor as a just ruler. Her freely given opinions and the fact that her advice was often heeded demonstrated the commonplace nature of royal women's participation in the governance of the Mongol Empire.

Chabi Khatun also promoted Tibetan Buddhism at the Yuan court and encouraged her husband, Khubilai Khan, to study it as well. While shamanism was the indigenous

religion of the Mongols, Buddhism was also well represented among Mongol elites, who held a distinct preference for Tibetan Buddhism. This provided a foundation for the eventual emergence of a distinctly Mongolian form of Buddhism rooted in Tibetan Buddhism but with an emphasis on ritual and the incorporation of local deities.

Perhaps due to her Buddhist faith, the empress showed compassion and respect for the defeated royals of the Song dynasty (960–1279), as she refused to take plunder from the Song treasure stores that were now at her disposal. Her refusal to take these valuables also exemplified Buddhist principles concerning the temporary nature of power and wealth. Furthermore, Chabi Khatun pleaded with her husband to send the Song empress back to her homeland south of the Yangtze River, since the northern climate did not agree with her health. Even though Khubilai Khan did not follow Chabi's advice in this instance, her pleas on behalf of the deposed Song empress offer a prime example of her compassion for the plight of others. Not discouraged from her mission, Chabi Khatun ensured that the former Song empress would be well treated wherever she remained.

Posthumous Yuan imperial memorials recounted that Chabi Khatun was virtuous, ethical, and righteous in her foresight and leadership. They described her as a great helpmate to Khubilai Khan, assisting him in rising to the position of emperor and in carrying out the duties of the state. She acted as an adviser, accompanied him on campaigns, and kept up correspondences to keep him informed of crucial events. Together they had four sons and five daughters. After Chabi Khatun's death, Khubilai Khan suffered ill health due to gout, grief, increased alcohol consumption, and the shame of military defeats in Japan. Khubilai Khan selected Chabi's son Jingim (1243–1286) as his heir. However, Jingim did not survive to outlive his father. Due to these circumstances, Jingim's son Temur (1265–1307) took the throne in 1294 as the next successor to rule the Yuan Khanate.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Government and Politics:* Temur Khan; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Onggirad; Sakya Buddhists; *Key Places:* Song Empire

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Chagatai Khan (d. 1242)

Chagatai (Chaghaday, Chagatay, Cha'adai) was the second son of Borte and Chinggis Khan. At the *quriltai* of 1206 Chagatai was assigned 4,000 men, and his appanage, or *ulus*, was initially in the vicinity of the Altai Mountains, roughly the pastures of the Naiman. Besides this small amount of information, virtually nothing is known of Chagatai's life prior to the invasion of the Jin Empire in 1211.

During this campaign, Chagatai co-commanded an army with his brothers Jochi and Ogodei and captured several cities. The three led other another army in 1213 that invaded modern-day Shaanxi and Henan Provinces. Overall the triumvirate was successful in their efforts, including seizing the pastures of the Jin Empire's cavalry reserves. During the Khwarazmian War, Chagatai again accompanied Ogodei against Otrar in 1218 and then joined their father at Samarkand. Afterward, Chagatai and Ogodei were sent to reinforce Jochi against Urgench in Khwarazm proper. Although there is scant evidence that Jochi and Chagatai could not cooperate with each other during the campaigns in the Jin Empire, enmity between the two clearly surfaced at Urgench, forcing Chinggis Khan to appoint Ogodei as the commander. After the fall of Urgench in 1221, Chagatai and Ogodei joined Chinggis Khan at Taliqan in modern-day Afghanistan. In addition to his combat duties, Chinggis Khan also charged Chagatai with the responsibility of maintaining roads and building bridges to keep the Mongols' lines of communications with Mongolia and Muqali open. His military career under his father continued against the Tangut rebellion when he commanded the rear guard.

Before his death, Chinggis Khan extended Chagatai's *ulus* into Mawarannahr, with Almalyk serving as Chagatai's administrative center as well as his summer pasture. Thus, his territory consisted of parts of modern-day Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Xinjiang in the People's Republic of China. Chinggis Khan admired his son's fidelity to the *yasa* but grew concerned about Chagatai's disdain for Jochi. Chagatai openly insulted Jochi and never considered Chinggis Khan to be Jochi's father. The two sons even erupted into fistcuffs in front of their father. Due to the acrimony between them, neither Chagatai nor Jochi could be considered for the throne.

If Chagatai felt any bitterness for being excluded from the throne, he never showed it. When Ogodei became khan, Chagatai served at his side dutifully and ensured stability during the regency period between Chinggis Khan's death and Ogodei's election. Chagatai also chastised his brother for his drunkenness as well as his boundless generosity. While Chagatai may not have successfully checked his brother's excesses, he did serve as a voice of reason and caution. After Ogodei's death Chagatai did the same when Ogodei's wife, Toregene, assumed the regency. Her legitimacy in the position was largely due to Chagatai's approval.

Chagatai had two primary wives, Yisulun and Togen, who were from the Onggirad tribe. Although he had several other wives and concubines, Yisulun was his favorite and primary wife. Chagatai had six sons: Mogetuken, Mochi Yaba, Balgashi, Sarban,

Yesu-Mongke, and Baidar. Mogetuken, Chagatai's favorite son and born from Yisulun, was killed during the Khwarazmian campaign at Bamiyan in Afghanistan. Mochi Yaba's mother was actually Yisulun's servant and deemed less important by his father. The mothers of the remaining sons are never mentioned.

Chagatai was known for being conservative and for holding a very strict interpretation of the *yasa* and the will of Chinggis Khan. While Chagatai and Ogodei often disagreed, it is because of Chagatai's adherence to the *yasa* and *yosun* of Chinggis Khan as well as his own fraternal devotion to Ogodei that he always deferred to his brother. In many Muslim sources Chagatai is often viewed negatively, as he greatly opposed the Islamic legal system and even suggested that Islamic ablutions before prayer and the Muslim way of slaughtering animals should be prohibited, as they were counter to the *yasa*. It is not clear whether this was out of disdain for Islam in general or whether it was simply because of his devotion to the *yasa*.

Chagatai died in 1242. The cause of death is uncertain, although his wife Yisulun accused one of his stewards, Vajir, a Uyghur, of poisoning him. As some sources indicate that Vajir attempted to cure Yisulun, his true motives remain murky. Nonetheless, Yisulun had him executed. Chagatai's successor was Qara Hulegu, his grandson, but when Guyuk became the ruler, he replaced Qara Hulegu with Yesu-Mongke, who was less likely to be independent. Chagatai had chosen Qara Hulegu because he was Mogetuken's son and also because Yesu-Mongke was a drunkard.

Timothy May

DEATH OF A SON

Mogetuken was Chagatai's favorite son and his chosen successor. Mogetuken was killed in combat while laying siege to the city of Bamiyan in modern-day Afghanistan during the Khwarazmian campaign. In retaliation, Chinggis Khan permitted his widow to avenge him by killing the entire population of Bamiyan. Toward Chagatai, Chinggis Khan behaved differently.

Chinggis Khan had grown weary of the squabbling between Jochi and Chagatai over Jochi's parentage. It had moved beyond teasing and even threatened to undermine their siege operations at Urgench. As far as Chinggis Khan was concerned, Jochi was his son. Furthermore, he had ordered Chagatai to cease all comments about Jochi's parentage. Aware that Chagatai ignored this command, Chinggis Khan decided to punish his son.

As Chagatai had not learned of Mogetuken's death, Chinggis Khan made it known that he would break the news to his son and that everyone else should simply say that Mogetuken was on a mission. When Chagatai arrived at Chinggis Khan's camp, the Mongol khan began by telling Chagatai that he was aware that Chagatai did not always obey his commands and expressed his anger in no uncertain terms. Chagatai responded that he would always obey him—test him, and if he disobeyed, he should be executed. Then Chinggis Khan simply said "Mogetuken is dead" and forbade his son from crying. Although his grief was immense, Chagatai controlled his emotions. Only later and out of sight did he allow himself to grieve in private. In front of his father, he never shed a tear.

See also: *Government and Politics: Yasa; Organization and Administration: Chagatai Khanate; Muqali; Individuals: Borte; Jochi; Ogodei Khan; Groups and Organizations: Naiman; Onggirad; Key Events: Quriltai of 1206; Key Places: Jin Empire*

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Chinggis Khan (1164–1227)

In the late 12th century, the warring tribal confederations of the Mongolian steppes were unified into a single nationality. The individual who did this also established the largest contiguous empire in history. Born in 1165 as Temujin (1165–1227), he received the title of Chinggis Khan first as the khan or leader of his own tribe, the Mongols, and then as the emperor of all the tribes of Mongolia after almost 20 years of conflict. During the course of his rise to power, Chinggis Khan created a new identity for the nomads by transforming them into one supratribes known as the Yeke Monggol Ulus, or great Mongol nation. Once they were unified, Chinggis Khan led his tribesmen into northern China and then into Central Asia and Iran, conquering more territory than anyone in history.

Chinggis Khan assumed the mantle of leadership early in his life. After the murder of his father Yesugei, his family was deserted by his tribe. At the time, Temujin was only 10 years old. It is unclear whether Temujin was the logical successor, as he possessed two half brothers from Yesugei's second wife, Ko'agchin, who may have been older or equivalent in age. Nevertheless, none of Yesugei's children were old enough to lead the Borjigin clan of the Mongols. A power struggle ensued between the sons of Hoelun, the mother of Temujin, and those of Ko'agchin. The end result of the struggle in 1180 was that Temujin and his brother Jochi Qasar murdered Bekhter, the eldest of Ko'agchin's sons, but spared the younger Belgutei.

In 1180 Temujin reached the age of 15, essentially attaining his majority, and became the leader of his family. After enduring a period of captivity among the Taiyichiud, a tribe that once served his father, Temujin slowly gathered a following. Even so, he suffered other hardships such as the kidnapping of his wife Borte by the Merkit, another

tribe. In spite of this, Temujin gradually won the loyalty of others and increased his following. He also became the vassal of ToghriI Ong Khan, the ruler of the Kereit tribal confederation. With this alliance, Temujin rescued his wife and steadily rose through the ranks of ToghriI's followers. He gained a reputation for respecting merit over heredity and status as well as for rewarding loyalty.

Temujin remained loyal to ToghriI for several years, but tensions built as Temujin's influence and power increased. In 1203 the two former allies clashed, and Chinggis Khan emerged victorious. With his defeat of the Kereit, the Mongols now controlled eastern and central Mongolia. The only significant force that remained in Mongolia was the Naiman in western Mongolia. After learning that the Naiman planned to attack him, Temujin made a surprise march into western Mongolia and defeated the Naiman in 1204 in the Battle of Chakirmaut.

With this victory, Temujin now had complete control over Mongolia. At the *quriltai* of 1206, he was officially declared the supreme ruler of the steppes and given the title Chinggis Khan. At this meeting, Chinggis Khan also reorganized his empire and the social structure of the nomads, transforming them into not only a state but also a formidable military. As the wars to unify Mongolia involved fighting numerous tribal groups, to maintain unity a new entity had to exist. Thus, Chinggis Khan created the Yeke Monggol Ulus and dealt with threats to his authority. Tribes that had been loyal to him through the years maintained their integrity. Those that he had defeated, however, were divided up and placed into the new units.

After uniting Mongolia, Chinggis Khan went on to conquer much of northern China and Central Asia. His wars were as often occasioned by his desire for retaliation for perceived wrongs as to territory or riches. In 1207 the Mongols began operations against the kingdom of Xi Xia, which comprised much of northwestern China and parts of Tibet. This campaign lasted until 1210, when the Xi Xia ruler submitted to Chinggis Khan.



Chinggis Khan, the founder of the Mongol Empire, died before his portrait was made. This portrait, made in ink and watercolor on silk, is the most famous illustration of him and can be found in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan. (The Gallery Collection/Corbis)

War with the Jin Empire, of which he was a former vassal, began in 1211. War continued against the Jin until 1234, well after Chinggis Khan's death. Meanwhile, in 1219 during the war in China, the Otrar Massacre took place in the Khwarazmian Empire.

With his armies engaged in China, Chinggis Khan attempted to find a peaceful solution, but diplomacy failed. Chinggis Khan left Muqali, a trusted general, to continue to fight the Jin while he led an army into Central Asia. In the war against the Khwarazmian Empire, which lasted from 1219 to 1222, the Mongols erased the Khwarazmian Empire from the face of the earth. Attacking from several directions, Chinggis Khan's armies carried out a campaign that is still considered strategically remarkable. Despite having conquered the empire, Chinggis Khan kept only the territories north of the Amu Darya River so as not to overextend his armies.

Chinggis Khan left Central Asia upon hearing that Xi Xia had rebelled in his absence. In 1226 his armies invaded Xi Xia once again to quell the uprising. While hunting during the campaign Chinggis Khan fell from his horse; he died later from internal injuries suffered in the fall. His followers completed the reconquest of Xi Xia and then buried Chinggis Khan in a secret location that remains a mystery, although several modern-day expeditions have attempted to find them.

Chinggis Khan's achievements as a leader extend well beyond his conquests. While these certainly gained him recognition among historians as a military and organizational genius, perhaps his greatest achievements were not so much in the field of military conquest. Indeed, he played a major role in five significant areas in the development of Mongolian society. The first was that he united the tribes of Mongolia into one nation and not simply a confederation that remained united through his might and charisma. This accomplishment has already been discussed. Second, he introduced a writing system into Mongolian society and forced the Mongolian nobility to become literate, although he remained illiterate. The last three cultural achievements were institutions he imposed on the Mongols that lasted well beyond his death. The first of these three was the *yasa*, or law code, that he imposed over the empire. Second, he created an army with absolute discipline out of the unruly tribes, as has been mentioned previously.

CHINGGIS KHAN AND PLUNDER

Before his rise to greatness, Temujin's following only grew because of his reputation for fairness and his charisma. Additionally, Temujin divided the plunder from warfare among all of those who participated, so all were ensured of a share. This attracted even more followers. Tied to this was a decree he made that anyone who stopped to gather booty during a raid would be punished. Temujin insisted that all should continue fighting until the battle was won, because if they plundered the enemy's camp before complete victory, the enemy could counterattack. Traditionally, plunder tended to be divided among the leaders, who then distributed it among their men. Due to this everyone had an incentive to take what one could on a raid to increase their share. Thus, their attention was focused on accumulating wealth rather than fighting.

With this he was able to forge an empire that stretched from the coasts of China to the shores of the Caspian Sea in his lifetime. It continued to grow after his death, a phenomenon in nomadic empires. The last institution that Chinggis Khan developed, or rather foresaw the advantages of, was an administration to govern his empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Muqali; *Ulus;* *Individuals:* Borte; Hoelun; *Groups and Organizations:* Kereit; Merkit; Naiman; *Key Events:* Chinggis Khan, Death of; Otrar Massacre; *Quriltai* of 1206; Teb Tenggeri, Death of; Yesugei, Death of; *Military:* Chakirmaut, Battle of; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Khwarazmian Empire; Xi Xia; *Primary Documents:* Document 6; Document 8; Document 9; Document 42

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Choban (d. 1327)

A Mongol commander who dominated Il-Khanid politics in the 14th century, Choban proved to be a remarkably resilient individual who navigated both political and military affairs adroitly. Choban was descended from Sorqan Shira of the Suldus tribe. Sorqan had saved Chinggis Kham's life in his youth when he had been captured by the Tayichiud. With the establishment of the Mongol Empire, Sorqan's action gave his descendants an entry into the aristocracy of the Mongol Empire. Choban reached the pinnacle of their ascension.

Choban served as a commander for many of the il-khans: Arghun, Geikhatu, Oljeitu, and Abu Said. Remarkably, despite the change of il-khans and the often chaotic periods of transition between rulers, when those who chose the wrong side often paid with their lives, Choban navigated the political waters without incident. He rose to distinction as a military commander during Ghazan's invasion of Syria. Choban further cemented his position by crushing the Karamanid Turks in Anatolia during the reign of Oljeitu. The latter achievement earned Choban the title of *amir al-umara*, Arabic for "commander of amirs," making him the leading military commander in the Il-Khanate in 1317. Choban also married Dulandi, the sister of the next il-khan, Abu Said, earning Choban the title of *guregen* (son-in-law) to the Chinggisids.

As Abu Said came to the throne at a very early age (12 years old), Choban ran affairs of the state and served as Abu Said's regent. Choban also groomed his own son, Dimashq Khwaja, to follow in his footsteps so that the true authority of the Il-Khanate came through Choban's family. As Abu Said was more or less under his control, Choban continued to expand and cement his power by appointing his sons as governors of several of the key provinces of the empire. His actions did not go unnoticed, and a number of other military commanders became concerned about his efforts to monopolize power and plotted to assassinate him. Their plan failed, and Choban survived the attack. With the assassination attempt on his life, Choban then secured the support of his youthful ward, Abu Said, to then crush his political opponents in 1319. In the same year Choban's wife Dulandi died. Choban maintained his direct connection to the imperial line by marrying Abu Said's other sister, Sati Beg.

Choban's position of dominance began to erode in 1325, however. Abu Said sought to marry Choban's daughter Baghdad Khatun. The key issue was not so much Abu Said's desire, as their marriage would have only been of further benefit to Choban. Baghdad Khatun, however, was already married to Sheikh Hasan Buzurg, one of the leading military commanders and head of the powerful Jalayirid tribe of the Mongols. Choban had arranged their marriage to secure Jalayir complaisance with his political machinations. Abu Said, however, resented Choban's refusal, regardless of the reason. As a youthful ruler, Abu Said did not fully understand Choban's reasoning and perhaps even used the scenario as a means to break Choban's dominance over him.

By now Abu Said was in his twenties and sought to rule for himself, not under Choban's tutelage and control. To this end, Abu Said sought to remove Choban from power. Even though Abu Said was ruler, he still needed to proceed cautiously, as Choban had accumulated not only military power but also significant political support throughout the empire, particularly with his sons occupying key positions in several provinces.

Abu Said's opportunity came in 1327. Threatened by Chagatayid incursions in Khurasan, Abu Said sent Choban to that frontier to deal with the problem. Choban's son Dimashq remained in the court in Sultaniyya to serve as his liaison and keep an eye on things, so to speak. With the powerful commander now distant, Abu Said executed Dimashq. It was not an arbitrary execution. Although it risked war with Choban, Abu Said could easily justify the action to anyone—Dimashq, in his pride and arrogance (which his father had not curbed), had taken liberties with women in Abu Said's harem. Furthermore, in his father's absence, Dimashq assumed his father's reins of power and acted as the virtual ruler, ignoring the fact that now Abu Said had attained his majority and that a decidedly more tactful manner of controlling him was required. Dimashq's insolence aroused Abu Said's ire, but his violation of the harem (which was supposed to be only accessible to the il-khan), opened the door for Dimashq's execution. No one could argue that Abu Said was in the wrong or had exceeded customary punishments for such a transgression.

Abu Said then sent orders to trusted commanders accompanying Choban in Khurasan as well as throughout the empire to eliminate the family of Choban. Despite widespread opposition to Choban, there were those still loyal to him (and who would also surely see a fall from grace with his demise) who warned Choban of the impending

SORQAN SHIRA

Sorqan Shira was a minor figure among the Suldus tribe, which was subordinate to the Tayichiud Mongols, one of the two major divisions of the Mongols during the lifetime of Yesugei. The Tayichiud captured a young Temujin not long after he murdered his brother, Bekhter. It is unclear how long Temujin remained captive, but during this period he was often confined to a *cangue*, a wooden device through which his head and hands were placed, much like the stocks or pillory during the American colonial era. This made it difficult for him to eat and sleep. He was passed from family to family among the Tayichiud to feed and watch. Sorqan's family allowed him to take the *cangue* off so he could sleep and treated him with compassion. One night during a celebration, Temujin attempted his escape. He knocked out his guard and hid. Sorqan found him but did not reveal his location. Sorqan then assisted Temujin in escaping and burned the *cangue* to conceal the evidence. Sorqan Shira later joined Temujin when he rose to power. Sorqan was received with honor, and his earlier service to Temujin was never forgotten.

disaster. Choban's efforts to negotiate a respite failed. He fled and took refuge in Herat, but the local ruler Ghiyath al-Din, who feared being seen as an accomplice, had Choban killed.

The efforts to terminate Choban and his heirs did not extend to the female branch, however. Abu Said married Dimashq Khwaja's daughter Dilshad Khatun. He also forced Sheikh Hasan Buzurg to divorce the beautiful Baghdad Khatun. In the wake of Choban's downfall, Sheikh Hasan Buzurg probably saw prudence as the order of the day and conceded to the il-khan's wishes. Baghdad Khatun married Abu Said shortly thereafter.

Not all of Choban's heirs were killed. With the collapse of the Il-Khanate after Abu Said's death, his grandson Hasan Kuchuk (Hasan the Lesser) set up a short-lived dynasty (1335–1358) that dominated much of Anatolia and Azerbaijan. It ended when the Golden Horde khan Janibeg invaded, capturing Tabriz and executing any of the Chobanids he found.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Women in the Court; *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; Khurasan; *Individuals:* Abu Said; Ghazan; Oljeitu

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Doquz Khatun (d. 1265)

Doquz Khatun, niece of Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252), belonged to the Kereit tribe and practiced Nestorian Christianity. Her father was Abaqu, son of the Kereit leader Toghril Ong Khan. Initially Doquz Khatun wed Tolui Khan (d. 1232), although the marriage was most likely not consummated. Following Mongol levirate marriage traditions, sons inherited all of their father's wives except for their own blood-related mothers. It was in this way that after the death of Tolui, Doquz Khatun married his son Hulegu (ca. 1216–1265), ruler of the il-khan domains of the Mongol Empire. She held elevated status over the other women of Hulegu's household due to her prior position as Tolui's wife. Doquz Khatun accompanied Hulegu on his journey westward, which culminated in the conquest of Baghdad in 1258 and the foundation of the Il-Khanate. In preparation for this venture, Mongke Khan advised Hulegu to heed the advice of Doquz Khatun so that she assisted her husband in an advisory capacity with the blessing and support of the ruler of the empire. As a result, in the Southwest Asian territories of the Mongol Empire that comprised the Il-Khanate, indigenous Christian populations found Doquz Khatun's status as a Christian queen to be extremely relevant.

Doquz Khatun's identification as a Nestorian Christian allowed conquered Christian populations within the domains of the Il-Khanate to view her as a coreligionist and an advocate for their causes. Her religious status helped subjects view Mongol rule in Persia, Armenia, and Georgia more favorably. Armenian historical accounts credited her with using her influence over her husband to spare the Christian population of Baghdad from the destruction of the initial Mongol invasion, which had resulted in the execution of the Abbasid caliph Al-Musta'sim. Such actions against Muslim populations and Islamic authority figures inflated the hopes of European crusading powers that a possible alliance could be affected. Diplomatic correspondence between European powers and the il-khans steadily increased during periods of Mongol hostility against Muslims and when Nestorian Christian women played prominent roles at court, although an actual alliance never came to fruition. While the Mongol invasion of the territories of the Abbasid Caliphate heralded disaster for Sunni Muslims, Shia and Nestorian Christian communities were not persecuted, and the Mongols spared noncombatant religious figures and scholars. In the western portions of the Mongol Empire religious identity often intertwined with political identity so that queens such as Doquz Khatun served as *de facto* representatives of local religious and political interests. Such subject peoples in Armenian and Georgian territories viewed her as a beacon for Christianity in their realms and as a positive influence on her husband, Hulegu, who maintained traditional Mongol shamanist religious affiliations. The Christian communities of the Il-Khanate deeply mourned her passing and worried about their future status within the empire. Such concerns were not unfounded, since after Doquz Khatun's death the preferential status of Christianity within the Il-Khanate steadily waned as Islamic conversions increased among Mongol elites.

Due to the influence of Doquz Khatun, King Hetum of Cilicia (d. 1271) viewed Hulegu as a friend of Christians everywhere, and he described Mongol rule in positive terms. However, political ties were maintained, and the Christian territory of Armenia

was not devastated because the kingdom submitted peacefully to the Mongols and paid tribute in a timely manner. If these Christian territories had resisted Mongol conquest, then no amount of friendship or ties of religious affinity would have spared them. With this in mind, Doquz Khatun served as a diplomatic touchstone for conquered Christian populations, but claims regarding her influence on their fate should be tempered by recognizing the significance of Mongol policies of religious tolerance for groups that did not threaten Mongol authority and for the greater importance of practical political and military concerns.

In comparison to other Mongol queens, much less is known about Doquz Khatun's political activities or her role in directly influencing affairs of state outside of religious matters. However, historical accounts describe her as highly influential, domineering, and well respected by the supreme ruler of the empire, Mongke Khan (d. 1259). Persian and Armenian accounts characterized her as a pious ally of Christian communities and also mentioned her charity work, especially the installment of new churches in the territories of the Il-Khanate. Yet her role as a benefactress was not limited to Christian causes, as she also made generous donations to Buddhist and Islamic endowments, just as her aunt Sorqoqtani-Beki had done. This further illustrates the religious tolerance that was commonplace for most Mongol rulers and the fact that Nestorian Christianity was more syncretic and less exclusionary than many other Christian denominations. Most significantly, accounts of Doquz Khatun illustrate the high status and influence of women at the Mongol courts as well as the ways in which the Mongols did not hesitate to take advantage of the eclectic religious affiliations of imperial family members to promote the goals of stability and territorial expansion.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Individuals:* Hulegu; Mongke Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kereit; Nestorian Christians

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Ghazan (1271–1304, r. 1295–1304)

Ghazan Khan was the seventh ruler of the Il-Khanate, reigning from 1295 until his death in 1304. Ghazan's reign is considered the pinnacle of Mongol rule in Persia, due largely to the success of his economic reforms. These reforms included a reassessment of the tax system, a reorganization of the *yam* communication network, attempts to recultivate lands destroyed during the conquest, and renewed efforts at territorial expansion through military conquest. Following his installation as khan in 1295, Ghazan converted to Sunni Islam and designated it as the state religion, making the Il-Khanate the first officially Muslim Mongol khanate. During this period Ghazan's vizier and adviser, Rashid al-Din, produced large parts of his history, *Jami' al-Tawarikh* (Compendium of Chronicles), which serves as one of the most important primary sources for the history of both the Mongols and the Il-Khanate.



Considered one of the greatest il-khans, this miniature titled “Ghazan Leaves Tabriz” comes from the *Jami al-Tawarikh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*), written by Ghazan's vizier Rashid al-Din, 14th century. Tabriz was the capital of the Il-Khanate for most of its history. (Corel)

Ghazan was born in Persia in 1271, the great-grandson of Hulegu and the son of Arghun (later Arghun Khan, r. 1285–1291). According to Rashid al-Din's account, Ghazan's early life and education were shaped largely by Mongol custom. For example, Ghazan was first taught to ride a horse at the age of three, and after his first hunt at the age of eight, he partook in an initiation ceremony known as *yaghlami-shi* wherein the slain animal's fat was rubbed on his thumb. As for his formal education, at the age of five he was put in the care of a Buddhist teacher, who taught him to read and write in Mongolian and Uyghur and also trained him in Mongol science and culture. This upbringing continued to influence Ghazan during his reign, as many of his reforms drew inspiration directly from earlier Mongol models and practices, particularly those enacted throughout the empire by the grand khan Mongke (r. 1251–1295).

Prior to Ghazan's reign, the Il-Khanate continued in the tradition

of Chinggis Khan by not adopting an official religion and granting religious freedom within its domains. The first Il-Khanid ruler to embrace Islam was Hulegu's son, Teguder. Though he did not name Islam as the official religion of the state, he did attempt to replace Mongol political traditions with Islamic ones. By doing so he lost the support of the army, was overthrown after only two years in power, and was replaced by Ghazan's father, Arghun, who presented himself as the defender of Mongol tradition and the *yasa* (legal code) of Chinggis Khan. To maintain the support of the Mongols while also establishing himself as a legitimate Muslim ruler, Ghazan avoided the mistakes of his predecessor by synthesizing Mongol and Islamic political thought rather than attempting to completely replace the former with the latter.

In 1295 Ghazan replaced his cousin Baidu as ruler of the Il-Khanate, three months after Baidu's own accession. The Mongol general Nowruz was instrumental in Ghazan's rise to power and seizure of the throne. A Muslim convert himself, Nowruz is said to have convinced Ghazan to adopt Islam to solidify his position in the region and gain the support of the primarily Muslim subject population. While sources indicate that Ghazan's conversion was sincere and based on genuine religious conviction, the decision was undeniably practical given the breakdown of central authority in the larger Mongol Empire and the Il-Khanate's predominately Muslim population. In breaking with the Mongol tradition of tolerance, immediately following his conversion and investiture as khan Ghazan reportedly condoned religious persecution against Christian, Jewish, Zoroastrian, and Buddhist communities. However, it is unclear whether these acts were the result of Ghazan's inclinations or Nowruz's. In 1297 Nowruz was deposed, convicted of treason, and executed. Following Nowruz's death, there was a marked shift in Ghazan's religious policies wherein he severely punished perpetrators of religious intolerance and actively sought to restore his relationship with non-Muslim communities.

Rashid al-Din states that at the outset of Ghazan's reign, four decades of destruction and mismanagement left the imperial treasuries empty and made tax collection impossible. To achieve and maintain stability and ensure the survival of Mongol rule, Ghazan set about establishing the administrative apparatus that would allow the Il-Khanid state not only to function but also to thrive. After consolidating his power, Ghazan reformed the system of tax collection to rebuild the treasury, ordering a population census and then creating separate but uniform systems of taxation for his nomadic and sedentary subjects. He also offered economic incentives, including tax breaks, for the cultivation of agricultural lands destroyed in the initial conquests 40 years earlier. To combat inflation, the weight and value of currency was fixed, the coinage was standardized, and gold currency was replaced in favor of a silver-based economy. Additionally, the *yam* communication network was rebuilt and maintained by the central treasury, encouraging trade and facilitating Ghazan's military expeditions in Syria against the Mamluks. Ghazan also embarked on a series of building projects in his capital of Tabriz, which emerged as the khanate's foremost city.

Ghazan died in 1304 at age 33 of natural causes, though like many of his close relatives his heavy alcohol consumption may have played a part in his early death. His brother, Oljeitu, succeeded him as khan. Though Ghazan's legacy is generally associated with his conversion to Islam, the economic reforms and cultural achievements of his

reign should not be overlooked. Ghazan's administrative policies, recorded and largely shaped by Rashid al-Din, successfully revived the bankrupt khanate and served as a model for later Islamic empires by synthesizing Turko-Mongol and Perso-Islamic imperial traditions.

Stephanie Honchell

See also: *Government and Politics:* Tabriz; *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; *Individuals:* Hulegu; *Key Events:* Mongol Conversion to Islam; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 43

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Guyuk (r. 1246–1248)

The reign of Guyuk (Guyug) was the shortest of all of the Mongol khans to rule the Yeke Monggol Ulus. Nonetheless, his importance cannot be overlooked, as both his rise to power and his actual reign had important ramifications for the empire. Little is known about his life prior to his ascension to the throne. He took part in the conquest of the Kipchak steppes and Rus' principalities. He was dismissed from the campaign, however, for insulting Batu at a feast. For this offense, Guyuk's father, Ogodei Khan, was furious and ordered him to the Song Empire front. Guyuk never departed, as Ogodei died in 1240.

Guyuk's primary wife was Oghul Qaimish, but he had other wives and concubines, although they are not named in the sources. Oghul Qaimish bore him two sons, Khwaja Oghul and Naqu. Guyuk also had a third son, Hoqu, born from a concubine. It is believed that Guyuk was a Nestorian Christian based on his affinity for Nestorian Christians in his court and government, but it is not certain that he himself embraced the religion. John of Plano Carpini noted that Guyuk was of medium height and was intelligent and very serious. He did not indulge in frivolity and was not known to laugh. Other sources indicate that he was sickly and enjoyed both drink and women. Thus, a mixed picture emerges regarding his personality.

Guyuk came to the throne, selected over two of his brothers and through the political acumen of his mother, Toregene. Nonetheless, he accomplished much in his

short reign. Unfortunately, most of this concerned the elimination of corruption, nepotism, and cronyism that had crept into the Mongol administration during the regency of Toregene. No major campaigns occurred, although Guyuk drafted orders to complete the conquest of China, the Middle East, and Europe.

Those issues, however, took a backseat to other matters. Guyuk almost immediately had to deal with a crisis when Chinggis Khan's youngest brother Temuge Otchigin attempted to seize power as the *quriltai* convened. The matter was defused, but Guyuk did not forget the trespass and ordered an investigation of the affair. This was carried out by Mongke, the eldest son of Tolui, and Orda, Batu's brother. Their participation is noteworthy, as it is clear that Guyuk sought the participation of other Chinggisids, thus providing a more balanced perspective. Temuge was deemed guilty of conspiring against the khan and put to death.

Despite his election in 1246, Guyuk did not immediately assume the reins of power. His mother continued to exercise authority for two or three months and only reluctantly relinquished power. Almost immediately he began to reverse her changes to the Mongol administration. He dismissed most of her favorites and cronies, executing some of them, and restored former ministers to power. He also executed Fatima, Toregene's confidante, as a witch.

Guyuk also followed Ogodei's example with magnanimous generosity. Like his father, Guyuk overpaid for goods from merchants to promote commerce. When the storehouses could hold no more, he distributed his largess to the troops and the people. Often as his camp moved he distributed cloth and gold to alleviate poverty among the population. He also nullified decrees issued during the interregnum as well as the *yam* passports, which had been given out freely during Toregene's regency, including to many merchants. Abuse of the *yam* system strained the resources and oppressed those nomads and villages that provided support for the *yam* stations. Thus, new passports were issued and distributed only to officials who demonstrated a clear need.



Guyuk Khan on a throne in a garden with a lute player and a maid offering a plate, from a Persian manuscript. Guyuk's reign was brief (1246–1248), and though he was known as a serious man, he also had a love of drink and women. (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

Guyuk also resumed the Mongol conquests. He dispatched Eljigidei to the Middle East to conquer that region, particularly the Assassins. Another army, led by the venerable general Subedei, was also sent to the Song front. Meanwhile, Guyuk would lead a new army to conquer Europe. This has often been thought to have been merely a front to strike Batu. Their mutual animosity was well known. While it is often assumed that Guyuk despised Batu for his father's (Jochi) questionable lineage, there is evidence that suggests that Guyuk's disdain stemmed from Batu's blundering performance as a military commander. Regardless, Sorqoqtani, Tolui's wife, sent a message to Batu that Guyuk was marching on him. Nothing came of the event, as Guyuk died in 1248 while on the march.

Guyuk's death brought the empire to a standstill. When he passed away, his primary wife Oghul Qaimish took control of his *ordo* (camp), as was customary. Oghul Qaimish took the body back to the Emil River, where Guyuk's *ordo* was located.

Guyuk attempted to restore the centralized authority that Ogodei had created, which removed power from the other Chinggisid princes. Toregene had left them to their own devices, which often led to the population being taxed by her administration and then also by the local princes. In addition to reappointing Ogodei's old officials, Guyuk assigned them to more clearly demarcated fiscal regions, which placed all fiscal and civil authority in the hands of the central government. Furthermore, he also appointed individuals to be the heads of the princely *uluses*. Yesu Mongke became the head of the

GUYUK AND RELIGION

Many sources assumed that Guyuk was a Nestorian Christian. He himself never stated his personal beliefs. Nonetheless, both Muslims and Christians speculated wildly about it. One such person was John of Plano Carpini, who attended a *quriltai* during Guyuk's reign. John of Plano Carpini, a Franciscan monk, was sent by the Papacy to determine the intentions of the Mongol Empire toward Europe as well as envoys from Aleppo, which had yet to submit to the Mongols. Carpini's attendance was particularly fortuitous, as Guyuk was fond of Christians, perhaps influenced by the Uyghur Chinqai, a member of the Church of the East, as was Qadaq, the commander who trained Guyuk in the art of war. During the *quriltai*, Guyuk and other Mongol notables enjoyed listening to the debates of the various religious scholars and others of various faiths who flocked to the Mongol camp in hopes of converting the khan to the One True Religion. In truth, no one had success in converting the khan to a new religion. Muslims assumed that this was because Guyuk was a Christian and favored them while he showed hostility to the Muslims. This may also account for a certain amount of hostility toward Guyuk in the Islamic sources. Considering that he maintained Mahmud Yalavach and Mas'ud Beg, two Muslim administrators, in high positions, one cannot conclude that he discriminated against Muslims. Christian sources tend to paint a more favorable picture. Furthermore, John of Plano Carpini carried back a message from Guyuk to Pope Innocent IV. In this letter Guyuk ordered the pope to come before him and submit and not to assume that God favored the Papacy. Clearly, whatever Guyuk's personal convictions were, they did not interfere with his duties as the ruler of the Mongol Empire.

Chagataid territories, replacing Qara Hulegu, Chagatai's grandson and chosen successor. Guyuk believed in seniority and elevated Yesu Mongke to the Chagataid throne, which also gained him firm support. So in this sense, Batu had reason to be concerned, as Orda was well liked by Guyuk.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Guyuk's Election; Toregene Khatun; *Individuals:* Batu; Mongke Khan; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; Ogodei Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* The Assassins; *Military:* Subedei; *Key Places:* Song Empire

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Hoelun (d. ca. 1210)

As the mother of Chinggis Khan, Hoelun of the Onggirad tribe held a revered place in the history of the Mongol Empire as the matriarch of the Chinggisid lineage. Known for her wisdom, sage advice, and virtuous qualities as a mother, she kept peace within her family and supported her son's efforts to conquer and unite the nomadic peoples of the Inner Asian steppes. Described as a spirited, independent, and outspoken woman, she set an example for other Mongol women. Hoelun represented an intelligent, strong female figure and likely influenced Chinggis Khan's policies, which allowed royal women to actively participate in the affairs of the empire.

While married to a Merkit tribesman, Chiledu, Hoelun was abducted by a Mongol named Yesugei (d. 1171) and taken as his own wife. During this incident Hoelun urged her Merkit husband to escape and look after his own life rather than attempt to save her. Hoelun mourned the loss of her first husband, but as he did not rescue her, she assimilated to her new life and her new Mongol husband. Her actions represented those of an ideal wife as one who was loyal and mourned her lost husband but also as one who accepted her fate and made the best of her situation.

In Mongol history, Hoelun served as the prime example of a model mother who, even in the face of adversity, maintained harmony among her sons. She gave birth to four sons and one daughter by Yisugei, named Temujin, Qasar, Qaji'un, Temuge, and

Temulun, respectively. After her husband's untimely death his Mongol kinsmen abandoned Hoelun and left her to raise her children independently. She and her children subsisted by fishing and gathering food to avoid starvation. This harsh existence exemplified poverty and a lack of resources in Mongol society, where pastoralism was the predominant means of subsistence. Temujin and his brother Qasar even murdered their half brother Bekhter after repeated quarrels over food, causing Hoelun to despair over this unnecessary bloodshed.

Hoelun and her children faced years of struggle and adversity until her son Temujin came of age. Temujin married Borte while he was a young man, but soon afterward Merkit tribesmen kidnapped his young bride. This was not a random abduction, as the Merkit tribesmen readily admitted that they took Temujin's wife as a means of direct retaliation for his father's prior actions. Previously, Yesugei kidnapped Hoelun and took her as a wife. The Merkit held a long-standing grudge against Yesugei for his actions, since Hoelun had originally been the wife of Chiledu of the Merkit tribe. Temujin engaged in warfare to retrieve his wife and eventually punished the Merkit with destruction and enslavement. The battles that began with this quarrel would in time develop into the Mongol conquest of all the various nomadic peoples of the Inner Asian steppes.

Many children were orphaned or taken as captives in the midst of this state of continuous warfare. Under these circumstances Hoelun adopted at least four young boys, named Guchu, Kokochu, Shigi-Qutuqu, and Boro'ul. She raised them as sons, and they became the loyal companions of Temujin. These adopted sons often assisted him in battle and were rewarded handsomely in return. In this way Hoelun's kindness toward orphans further cemented her reputation as an idealized mother figure who was owed a great deal of respect and gratitude. After Temujin earned the title of Chinggis Khan and completely conquered the tribes of the steppes, he rewarded his mother for all her efforts in rallying the people to his cause. In a show of gratitude, Chinggis Khan gave her control of 10,000 people and 4 military commanders.

While Hoelun was known for her role as a mother and caretaker, she was also an outspoken and active participant in family affairs. For example, when the shaman Teb Tenggeri attempted to foment strife and turn Chinggis Khan against his brother Qasar, his plan failed because of the intervention of Hoelun. Initially, Chinggis Khan seized his brother Qasar and sent him away to be held as a bound captive. However, when Hoelun heard of these events she rode into the night on her white camel to rescue Qasar. After untying Qasar, she severely reprimanded Chinggis Khan so that he became ashamed of himself and frightened of her anger. The result was that Chinggis Khan did not kill his brother Qasar, although he did greatly limit his share of imperial rewards.

Overall, the difficulties that Hoelun faced throughout her lifetime along with her devotion to her children, both adopted and biological, paved the way for her to be represented as an exemplar for Mongol women and as the primary matriarch of the Chinggisid lineage. She was a remarkably resourceful woman who survived independently with her children. She endured the harsh conditions of life on the steppes without the benefit of extended community support until her son grew to adulthood to claim his place and founded an empire. Triumphant over such difficulties earned Hoelun the respect of her sons. Consequently, Chinggis Khan's reverence for her also set a

precedent that allowed other strong-willed women to rise in positions of status and authority within the Mongol Empire.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Qasar; *Individuals:* Borte; Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Merkit; Onggirad; *Key Events:* Teb Tenggeri, Death of; Yesugei, Death of

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Hulegu (1217–1265)

Hulegu's early life is a mystery, but he was the son of Chinggis Khan's fourth son, Tolui, and his wife Sorqoqtani. Hulegu was the younger brother of Mongke, the fourth khan of the empire, and Khubilai Khan. Despite being in the shadows of his elder brothers, Hulegu carved his own impressive legacy in history by conquering much of the Middle East. We know that Chinggis Khan honored him and his brother, Khubilai, on their first kill while hunting.

Hulegu enters history with Mongke's ascension to power. After Mongke stabilized his rule over the empire, he renewed the efforts of expanding the Mongol Empire, which had largely ceased since the death of Ogodei. It was truly an effort of the sons of Tolui. While Mongke and Khubilai marched against the Song dynasty in southern China, Hulegu led an army of 150,000 men to conquer the Middle East. Meanwhile, their brother Ariq Boke remained in Mongolia to manage the affairs of the empire. Although Chormaqan had secured the submission of most of Iran in the 1230s and expanded westward, there were still some issues that needed to be resolved.

The Nizari Ismailis, a sect of Shia Muslims known as the Assassins, were Hulegu's first target. Members of this branch of Ismailis were known for being masters of disguise and for their assassination of political leaders throughout the region. Fact and rumor enhanced their reputation so that they were feared across Eurasia. Conflict between the Assassins and the Mongols erupted in 1240 after the death of Chormaqan. Prior to this they had been allies and perhaps even clients of the Mongols. Rumors of an attempt on Mongke's life sealed their fate.

In 1256, Hulegu's army marched from Central Asia and across the Amu Darya River and toward the Alburz Mountains south of the Caspian Sea. While Hulegu's own approach was leisurely, his lieutenant and commander of the vanguard, Ket Buqa, began



Hulegu (r. 1260–1265) was the first il-khan and the conqueror of Baghdad. This Persian miniature depicts Hulegu Khan on his throne. (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

Although the Abbasid Caliphate was weak, its destruction sent shock waves throughout the region. Hulegu's continued advance toward Syria sent waves of panic through the populace as leaders met hurriedly to discuss whether to submit or resist. Many of the local princes in what is now northern Iraq, eastern Turkey, and northern Syria came and submitted to Hulegu. One such ruler was Bohemund VI of Antioch and Tripoli, a crusader prince. Another was King Hethum of Cilicia, who journeyed to Karakorum to submit to Mongke during his enthronement.

Hulegu then led his massive army toward Aleppo. The city, which was never taken by the crusaders despite a number of sieges, fell within five days. Recognizing the lack of pasture in Syria, Hulegu withdrew the majority of the army to the lush pastures of the Mughan Plain in what is now Azerbaijan. While Ket Buqa captured Damascus in 1260, Hulegu withdrew the bulk of the army to the Mughan Plain in modern-day Azerbaijan. He had also received word of the death of his brother Mongke and needed to determine what would happen next. Meanwhile, Ket Buqa continued to conquer much of Syria.

While Hulegu's gaze was focused east to determine who would ascend the throne, the Mamluks of Egypt defeated Ket Buqa at Ayn Jalut in modern-day Israel in 1260.

the assault on their mountain castles. Despite a stiff resistance and some attacks in the open, the Assassins had little chance against the Mongols in open combat. Thus, a series of sieges began that quickly reduced their principal fortresses. As Rukn al-Din, the Ismailis' leader, had taken refuge at Maymun-Diaz, Hulegu focused his efforts there and captured the castle after two weeks. Hulegu then used his presence to secure the surrender of other fortresses. When Rukn al-Din no longer proved useful, Hulegu sent him with an escort to Karakorum.

With the destruction of the Assassins, Hulegu then continued his westward march to Baghdad. Although the Abbasid Caliphate was the titular head of the Islamic world, in reality it had very little power. Before long Hulegu's army overwhelmed the defenses of Baghdad in 1258, and the Abbasid Caliphate came to an end.

Although he made some effort to reconquer it at the time, most of Hulegu's attention was focused on the looming civil war. With Mongke's death, the empire split into four khanates: the Golden Horde, the Chagatai Khanate, the Yuan Empire, and Hulegu's own Il-Khanate.

Almost immediately war erupted with his cousin Berke, the ruler of the Golden Horde. Muslim sources justified the war due to the anger of Berke, a Muslim, over Hulegu's execution of the caliph. While this may have played a role, the larger issue was that Hulegu's kingdom included territory that Berke believed was part of his own realm. The war was not truly resolved until 1335, when the Il-Khanate abruptly ended.

Although Hulegu established a new kingdom, the civil war and war with the Mamluks prevented him from creating a stable realm. Yet during his reign, he and his queen Doquz Khatun were viewed as magnanimous rulers by the various Christian sects in the Middle East, while Muslims viewed him as oppressive. Hulegu also had frequent correspondence with European rulers in an effort to coordinate attacks on the Mamluks. He supported Khubilai Khan's claim to the throne and maintained contact via the sea route around India. Although Hulegu died in 1265, the legacy of his actions still loom large in history, particularly his destruction of the Abbasid Caliphate.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; *Individuals:* Doquz Khatun; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; *Groups and Organizations:* The Assassins; *Military:* Ayn Jalut, Battle of; Baghdad, Siege of; *Key Places:* Abbasid Caliphate; Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 26

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Ibn Battuta (1304–1369)

Abu 'Abdallah ibn Battuta, commonly known simply as Ibn Battuta, was born in Tangier, Morocco, in 1304. At the age of 21, he left Tangier to undertake hajj, the pilgrimage to Mecca, after which he continued his travels for the next 30 years, traversing more than 70,000 miles across North Africa, the Middle East, East Africa, Russia, Central Asia, India, China, and West Africa. During this time he visited the Mongol courts of

the il-khans in Persia, the Golden Horde in Russia, the Chagatayid Khans in Central Asia, and possibly the Yuan court in China. Though he is often referred to as the “Muslim Marco Polo,” Ibn Battuta’s journey differed significantly from Polo’s, as he traveled almost exclusively within the known Islamic world, interacting primarily with coreligionists and often using Arabic as a common tongue. After returning to Morocco for good in 1354, the local ruler commissioned the *Rihla* (Book of Travels) to learn about the far reaches of the Islamic world. The *Rihla* continues to serve as an important source for understanding the diverse cultures and customs of the Dar al-Islam during the first half of the 14th century.

At the time of Ibn Battuta’s birth, the Berber Marinid (1244–1465) dynasty had risen to power in Morocco, ushering in a period of relative political stability. Though not as cosmopolitan as the capital in Fez, Tangier’s location along the Strait of Gibraltar made it an important crossroads for commercial and cultural exchange. Ibn Battuta’s family included religious scholars, and as a young man he trained as a jurist of the Maliki legal rite. This legal training served Ibn Battuta well during his travels, garnering him respect as a religious scholar and securing him employment as a *qadi* (judge) in both Delhi and the Maldives. Additionally, during his early life Ibn Battuta developed an appreciation for Sufism, or mystical Islam. Though never renouncing material interests to take up the life of a mystic, he befriended and accepted hospitality from Sufis throughout his travels and demonstrates a great deal of respect for Sufism in his writings.

Departing Tangier in 1325, Ibn Battuta made his way across the Maghreb to Mamluk Egypt. Rather than proceed directly to Mecca, he first visited Jerusalem and Damascus. After completing his pilgrimage, he joined the il-khan’s official caravan, eventually making his way to Baghdad. While in the Il-Khanate he was received by the Mongol ruler Abu Said (r. 1316–1335). Ibn Battuta left Mongol Persia to embark on a second pilgrimage and then ventured south to the Yemen, East Africa, and Oman. He eventually returned north, visiting Anatolia, Azerbaijan, and the Mongol-ruled Golden Horde in Russia. This represented Ibn Battuta’s first interaction with predominantly Turkic Muslim populations, and the *Rihla* records the sense of culture shock he experienced for the first time since leaving Morocco. The Turkic Muslims were followers of the Hanafi legal rite, and several Turkic practices—including the widespread consumption of alcohol—offended Ibn Battuta’s Maliki sensibilities. Additionally, he was scandalized by the relative gender equality he witnessed at the court of Uzbek Khan (r. 1313–1341) in the Golden Horde, where the ruler’s wives appeared unveiled in public and regularly partook in political discussions. One of Uzbek’s wives was the daughter of the Byzantine emperor Andronicus III (r. 1328–1341), and Ibn Battuta was invited to join her retinue in Constantinople.

Almost a decade after setting out, Ibn Battuta next made his way to India via Central Asia and spent nearly two months at the court of the Chagatayid ruler Tarmashirin (r. 1326–1334), who is described as a just and competent ruler. It is of note that when listing the seven greatest kings in the world, Ibn Battuta included the rulers of all four Mongol successor states. Thus, even after the collapse of the unified empire, the Mongols themselves continued to wield significant power and influence across Eurasia. From Central Asia, Ibn Battuta continued to the Delhi Sultanate, ruled by the eccentric

Muhammad Tughluq (r. 1325–1351), who appointed Ibn Battuta as the *qadi* of Delhi despite his lack of experience or qualifications. The sultan later sent Ibn Battuta as his ambassador to the Mongol Yuan court in China. However, while Ibn Battuta was ashore in Calicut, a storm destroyed his ships and the gifts he was entrusted with delivering to the Yuan emperor. Fearful of returning to Delhi, Ibn Battuta made his way to the Maldivian Islands (where he enjoyed an appointment as chief *qadi*) and Ceylon before eventually making his way to China. His account of China is vague and rife with inaccuracies, making it difficult to discern the extent of his travels and indicating that his depiction of the Yuan court may be borrowed from the accounts of other travelers.

In 1346, Ibn Battuta finally began the long journey home to Morocco. Along the way, he encountered a changed world. Since his eastward journey, the Il-Khanate in Persia had collapsed, and the Black Plague was spreading rapidly across the Middle East and North Africa. He arrived in Morocco in 1349, embarking on later travels to Spain and the Mali Empire in West Africa. In 1354, he began composing an account of his travels with the help of Granadan scholar Ibn Juzayy, who is credited with crafting Ibn Battuta's memories into the stylized form preserved in the *Rihla*. Little is known of Ibn Battuta's later life, though he appears to have remained in Morocco until his death in 1368 or 1369. The Moroccan traveler's legacy can still be seen in many parts of the Islamic world, where ferryboats, roads, and even shopping malls bear his name.

Stephanie Honchell

See also: *Government and Politics:* Uzbek Khan; *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Abu Said; *Key Events:* Black Death; Tarmashirin, Overthrow of; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah (r. 1221–1230)

Jalal al-Din accompanied his father on his flight from the Mongols and was with him at his death on an island in the Caspian Sea. Shortly before his death, Muhammad made Jalal al-Din his successor, possibly realizing that his bellicose yet heroic son was the Khwarazmi's last chance to withstand the Mongols. Jalal al-Din then returned to the empire and headed to his appanage in modern-day Afghanistan. There he defeated a Mongol army in the Parwan Valley, the only Mongol defeat during the campaign. This gained the attention of Chinggis Khan, who advanced against him. Jalal al-Din retreated to the Indus and

fought the Mongols there. Mongol forces overwhelmed his army, but Jalal al-Din escaped by riding his horse over a cliff and into a river, escaping the Mongols.

Following his defeat by Chinggis Khan at the Indus River in 1221, Jalal al-Din spent three years in India. After a number of failed endeavors to make an alliance with the Sultanate of Delhi, Jalal al-Din moved to western Iran in 1224. Although he was still the sultan of the Khwarazmian Empire, he was a king without a kingdom and sought to establish a new one from the ruins of his father's empire.

En route he confirmed vassals in Kirman and Fars, where the rulers were former generals under his father. Rather than attempt to establish new kingdoms, they accepted his suzerainty while maintaining their positions in their respective regions.

Once in western Iran, Jalal al-Din quickly deposed his brother Ghiyath al-Din, who established himself as ruler in the region. Jalal al-Din then began to expand his new empire by invading Azerbaijan in the winter of 1224–1225. He successfully captured the capital, Tabriz, on July 25, 1225. The following year, Jalal al-Din invaded the Christian kingdom of Georgia and sacked Tiflis (now Tbilisi) in March 1226.

A rebellion in the same year delayed further conquests, but in 1227 the appearance of the Mongols stymied any idea of expansion. The invasion force, however, was comparatively small compared to the force that defeated Jalal al-Din in 1221. Jalal al-Din's army encountered them near the city of Isfahan (now in Iran). Sources vary in their accounts of the battle, with some granting victory to the Mongols and others granting victory to Jalal al-Din. All accounts, however, agree that in the end, the Mongols retired back to Central Asia due to heavy losses.

With the Mongols' absence, Jalal al-Din resumed his conquests and attempts to expand his new empire in West Asia. In 1229 he again invaded Georgia and later laid siege to the city of Akhlat (now in Turkey). The latter action, however, attracted the attention of Sultan al-Ashraf of Aleppo and Damascus and the Seljuk sultan Kay-Kubad I of Rum (now Turkey), who began to view Jalal al-Din as a threat. Joining forces in August 1230, the two sultans defeated Jalal al-Din in the Battle of Erzinjan in modern-day Turkey.

Jalal al-Din's defeat had significant repercussions. Not only was it his first significant defeat since returning from India, but it showed the limitations of his power. Although Jalal al-Din had gained a reputation as a great warrior and portrayed himself as a bulwark protecting the Islamic world from the Mongols, the defeat demonstrated that other Muslim leaders viewed him as being as much of a threat as the Mongols. Even as a new and much larger Mongol army under the command of Chormaqan Noyan had entered Iran, Sultan al-Ashraf and Sultan Kay-Kubad, the very men who defeated Jalal al-Din earlier in the year, declined Jalal al-Din's offer of an alliance.

Although he avoided the Mongols, Jalal al-Din soon met his fate. While the circumstances remain unclear, Kurdish peasants murdered him in 1231 either to avenge a past crime by him or simply for gain. Although the ruler of Amid recovered the body and gave it a proper burial, rumors abounded concerning the disappearance of Jalal al-Din. Occasionally pretenders appeared claiming to be him, with the Mongols then hunting them down to ensure that a given pretender was not Jalal al-Din.

Jalal al-Din's five-year expansion dramatically changed the face of the medieval world. The most immediate impact was that his presence and activities attracted the

attention of the Mongols. Prior to his return from India, the Mongols had focused their attention on conquering China and made no moves into the Middle East, despite having raided extensively throughout Iran as well as Transcaucasia in 1220–1221. Indeed, in the years preceding Jalal al-Din's return, the Mongols expressed very little interest in the area. Chormaqan's invasion was specifically meant to destroy the last remnant of Khwarazmian power and to end any threat from Jalal al-Din.

Connected with this yet directly tied to Jalal al-Din's conquest was that the Georgian and Armenian principalities were in little position to make a determined resistance against the Mongols. Jalal al-Din's efforts against them had been destructive and were often repeated, as he demonstrated more interest in plunder than in a stable empire.

Jalal al-Din's defeat and the collapse of his brief empire had further ramifications on the Middle East. After the Mongols defeated him near Amid, his army dispersed across Syria and Turkey. Many of the troops served as mercenaries in Rum and Syria. They played prominent roles in dynastic struggles among the Ayyubids, the successors of Saladin. In addition, one such force of Khwarizm troops sacked Jerusalem in 1244 while in the pay of Sultan Ayyub of Egypt, thus taking the holy city from the rule of the crusaders for the final time.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Military:* Chormaqan Noyan; *Key Places:* Khwarazmian Empire; *Primary Documents:* Document 11

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THE PURSUIT OF JALAL AL-DIN

While Chormaqan consolidated Mongol gains in Iran, another force marched against Jalal al-Din. Jalal al-Din narrowly escaped while wintering in the Mughan Plain (now in Azerbaijan). At the time Jalal al-Din thought that the Mongols were still several hundred miles away, and he attempted to gather his troops in the Mughan Plain. The Mongols, however, surprised him there. While the Mongols shattered his army, he fled to the environs of Lake Urimiya (now in Iran) and successfully eluded the Mongols.

Chormaqan then directed a task force commanded by his lieutenant, Taimaz, to hunt down Jalal al-Din. Upon Taimaz's approach Jalal al-Din again resumed his flight, first to Armenia and then to Aklat, again eluding the Mongols. Believing that the Mongols lost his trail, Jalal al-Din then traveled to the city of Amid (now in Turkey) with the remnants of his forces. Although his scouts found no traces of Taimaz's forces, the Mongols suddenly descended upon Jalal al-Din's camp. Although he escaped, they soon renewed their hunt. Jalal al-Din again proved elusive and hid in the mountains of Kurdistan (now Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran). Unfortunately this proved to be disastrous, as he was murdered by Kurdish peasants in 1231.

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Jochi (d. 1225)

Although Jochi was the eldest son of Borte, it is unlikely that he was the eldest son of Chinggis Khan. After Borte's abduction by the Merkit, it was several months before Chinggis Khan rescued her. When he did, she was quite pregnant. She gave birth to Jochi while Chinggis Khan lived in Jamuqa's camp. Some accounts attribute this to the boy's name, Jochi (meaning "guest") because they were guests of Jamuqa. Other sources link the name to Jochi being a guest in Chinggis Khan's household. Chinggis Khan, however, always considered Jochi his son, although the shadow of illegitimacy clouded their relationship throughout Jochi's life.

After his birth, Jochi does not appear in history until 1203, when Chinggis Khan attempted to arrange a marriage for Jochi. One bride, Sorqan, came from the Onggirad, Borte's tribe, and the other was to be from the Kereit in an attempt to strengthen the Mongols' alliances with both tribes. While the Kereit Khan Toghril was initially pleased with the suggestion, Senggum, his son and father of the bride, Cha'ur Beki, rejected this, as he viewed the Mongols with disdain and as socially inferior. The Kereit did use the proposal, however, as bait for a trap to lure Chinggis Khan to his doom. It was discovered, and the Kereit were defeated after a series of battles in 1204, after which Jochi married Cha'ur.

In 1207, Jochi received his first independent military command and led an army against the Forest People. He successfully secured the submission of the Oirat, the Kyrgyz, and a number of other tribes and returned to Chinggis Khan rich with tribute in furs and gyrfalcons in addition to horses and representatives who gave formal obeisance to the Mongol khan. Jochi's daughter Qoluyiqan married Torelchi, the son of the Oirat leader Quduqa Beki, cementing ties between Jochi and the Oirat.

In 1211 Jochi led an army with his brothers Chagatai and Ogodei against the Jin Empire. While command was officially shared, Jochi served as the primary commander due to his experience. In 1213, the three brothers also successfully campaigned in Hebei and Shanxi Provinces as well. Jochi does not appear to have served in other campaigns against the Jin Empire. He did, however, accompany Subedei in hunting down the final Merkit refugees who had fled into the Kipchak steppes in 1218. The two successfully defeated the Merkit and their Qangli allies but then encountered Muhammad II Khwarazmshah. Despite Jochi's efforts to extricate the Mongols from conflict diplomatically, the Khwarazmians chose to engage in battle. Although the Mongols were outnumbered, they held their own and departed the area under the cover of darkness. The encounter left the Khwarazmshah shaken by the Mongols' martial prowess.

After the Otrar Massacre, Jochi returned to the Khwarazmian campaign and engaged in a sweeping attack along the Syr Darya River in 1220. He finished his campaign

at Urgench in 1221. He cautiously proceeded against the city due to the difficulty of the terrain and defenses and also because the city was to become one of his possessions, and thus he wished to limit the destruction if possible. Chinggis Khan, however, grew impatient and sent Ogodei and Chagatai to reinforce Jochi. Enmity between Chagatai and Jochi arose, forcing Chinggis Khan to name Ogodei as the commander of the operation. The siege did end with the destruction of Urgench in 1221.

Afterward, Jochi was sent to subdue the Kipchak tribes around the Aral Sea. Perhaps annoyed with the result at Urgench as well as a growing rift with his father, Jochi instead spent much of his time hunting in the steppes. Although he sent a herd of wild asses to his father as tribute, Chinggis Khan was not pleased with his son's failure to perform his military duties.

Much if not all of the animosity between Chagatai and Jochi arose from his questionable parentage. Chagatai may have also resented Jochi's position as eldest son. The two quarreled frequently in private and before their father. When Chinggis Khan attempted to determine his successor, he discounted both Jochi and Chagatai on these grounds alone before settling on Ogodei.

Although Jochi accepted the nomination of Ogodei, it is uncertain if he held a grudge against his father for denying him the throne. Whether it was due to this, a seeming slight by his father at Urgench, or over the hunting tribute, Jochi became estranged from his father. Chinggis Khan reciprocated the feelings. The matter resolved itself in 1225 with the death of Jochi. Rumors persisted that Chinggis Khan had his son poisoned.

Regardless of the strained relationships between Jochi and his father and also Chagatai, Jochi's family was firmly ensconced in the Mongol Empire. The Jochid Ulus, or patrimony, stretched from the Irtysh River to as far west as the Mongol horses' hooves had trod, eventually reaching the Carpathian Mountains.

In addition to Cha'ur, Jochi married Begtutmish Fujin, another Kereit princess and sister of Sorqoqtani. He also married another woman of the Onggirad named Oki Fujin. It is alleged that he had 40 sons. The most well known were Batu and Berke, who ruled the Golden Horde. His eldest son Orda, born from Sorqan, played a prominent role in the Jochid Ulus and the affairs of the Mongol Empire. His son Shayban would become the ancestor of the Uzbeks.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Individuals:* Batu; Borte; Chinggis Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; *Groups and Organizations:* Forest People; Kereit; Kipchaks; Merkit; Oirat; *Key Events:* Baljuna Covenant; Otrar Massacre; *Quriltai* of 1206; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Khwarazmian Empire; Kipchak Steppes

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Khubilai Khan (1215–1294)

Khubilai Khan, probably the most famous Mongol Khan after his grandfather, Chinggis Khan, was the founder of the Mongol Yuan dynasty that ruled over most of East Asia until 1368. Khubilai was one of the four sons of Sorqoqtani and Tolui. Although Khubilai established himself as the titular ruler of the Mongol Empire, his brothers were also significant personages in history. Mongke (d. 1259), his elder brother ruled the empire from 1251–1259, while Hulegu (d. 1265) established the Mongol Il-Khanate in the Middle East. Khubilai fought a civil war with his brother Ariq Boke (d. 1265) after the death of Mongke for control of the empire, which Khubilai won in 1264.

The empire that Khubilai won was not the entire Mongol Empire, which had stretched from the Sea of Japan to the Carpathian Mountains, but instead consisted of the eastern portions—Mongolia, Korea, and modern-day China, including Tibet. Meanwhile, the Chagatai Khanate in Central Asia varied from fighting Khubilai to recognizing him as its overlord, depending on the ruler. The Il-Khanate in the Middle East remained a steadfast ally and subordinate state, but the Golden Horde provided only token recognition to Khubilai Khan and waged war against the Il-Khanate.

The greatest military achievement during Khubilai's lifetime was the conquest of southern China and the Song dynasty. War with the Song began in 1234 and lasted until Khubilai finally conquered them in 1279. Between 1234 and 1250, the Mongols made little headway. Mongke's ascension to the throne began a concerted effort as he and Khubilai led large armies against the Song. When Mongke died, Khubilai became the primary leader of the campaign, which was halted for the most part until Khubilai became khan after his civil war with Ariq Boke. After securing the state against Ariq Boke, Khubilai redoubled his efforts. His armies led by Bayan steadily reduced the Song mountain fortresses. The use of a navy allowed the Mongols to isolate cities. Khubilai also increased the use of Chinese infantry. The use of the navy and infantry was pivotal because the mountainous terrain and numerous rice paddies hampered the traditional Mongol cavalry. Finally, in 1272 the Mongols captured the city of Xiangyang after a three-year siege. Although the conflict lasted another seven years, Khubilai finally conquered the Song Empire in 1279 with a naval victory at Yaishan.

A major thorn in Khubilai's side was this cousin Qaidu, who dominated Central Asia, even usurping control of the Chagatai Khanate. The armies of Qaidu and Khubilai vied for control of what is now modern-day Xinjiang as well as much of western Mongolia. Qaidu's presence played a role in Khubilai's decision to abandon Karakorum as

the capital—it was simply too vulnerable and expensive to maintain. Khubilai, however, never defeated his cousin, and the war continued until Qaidu died, years after Khubilai's death. While Qaidu's forces were unable to topple Khubilai Khan, he did encourage others to also rebel against Khubilai's reign, forcing Khubilai to deal with rebels in Mongolia and Manchuria on multiple occasions.

When not embroiled with civil wars against his cousins, Khubilai attempted to expand his empire. Twice he sent a navy against Japan, but both efforts failed. His advisers eventually convinced him that the cost of the invasions outweighed the benefits. Nonetheless, Khubilai's overseas ventures did not end with Japan. In 1289, Khubilai's envoys requested the submission of the kingdoms of Java. Initially, the Mongols had early success, especially after fighting broke out among rival powers on Java. Some rulers submitted to the Mongols.

After the Mongols won the Battle of Kediri, it appeared that the island was theirs. However, Prince Vijaya, who had submitted the Mongols, betrayed them and drove the Mongols off the island. Khubilai Khan's other attempts at conquest outside of China had limited success. Invasions of modern-day Vietnam and Burma failed, although many of the princes decided that it was better to pay tribute than to face continual Mongol raids and invasions. Although militarily the invasions were failures, Khubilai was still successful as he had sought to reestablish the tribute system in which neighboring powers had sent tribute to the Song.

Although Khubilai's military operations overseas and in Southeast Asia were desultory, it is still amazing that he could even attempt them. During his entire reign, his armies were continuously active against other Mongol armies in Central Asia. In many ways the invasion of Japan and Java were luxuries, but Khubilai Khan's major concern was quelling the war with his rival and cousin Qaidu in Central Asia.

Khubilai's ability to carry out these wars is reflected in his administration. In the early years of his reign he was very active in the administration of the empire. The Yuan Empire, particularly the Chinese territories, was reorganized into new provinces, and a



Khubilai Khan, grandson of Chinggis Khan, was emperor of the Yuan dynasty of China. Under Khubilai Khan, the Mongols conquered the Song Empire. He proclaimed the Da Yuan, or Yuan dynasty, in 1271 and ruled until his death in 1294. (Keren Su/Corbis)

number of new departments in the government were opened. Although Khubilai Khan embraced many aspects of Chinese style rule, he remained a Mongol in his heart and took steps to ensure that the Mongols were not assimilated. He did this by maintaining Mongols as well as foreigners, such as Marco Polo, as the upper levels of the government. He also embraced Tibetan-style Buddhism over Daoism and limited the influence of Confucianism in the running of the government. The death of his favorite wife Chabi, however, affected Khubilai adversely. Drinking, gout, and giving into indulgence to soothe her loss increasingly distanced him from government affairs. Nonetheless, Khubilai Khan's empire remained the most powerful state in the world in the late 13th century. There was little reason to think that it would end 73 years after his death in 1294.

Khubilai's rule was known for the magnificence of his court as well as his wisdom and accomplishments. Although his military record was not like his grandfather's, Khubilai's fame endured. Immortalized in *The Travels of Marco Polo* as well as Coleridge's poem *Xanadu*, Khubilai Khan's image has only grown over time.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; Khubilai Becomes Khan; *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; Yuan Society; *Individuals:* Mongke Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Sakya Buddhists; *Key Events:* Japan, Invasion of; *Key Places:* Song Empire; Xiangyang, Siege of; *Primary Documents:* Document 29; Document 30; Document 32; Document 36; Document 39

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Mongke Khan (1209–1259, r. 1251–1259)

The eldest son of Tolui became the last khan of a unified Mongol Empire through the Toluid Revolution. In the process, Mongke Khan restored the dynamism of the Mongol Empire, which had become moribund during the regency of Oghul Qaimish. Mongke also initiated a new series of campaigns in the Middle East and against the Song Empire.

Mongke, whose name means “Eternal,” was noted for his ability at an early age. The shaman Teb Tenggeri remarked that Mongke was destined for greatness, and it Teb Tenggeri who bestowed the name Mongke on the child. Ogodei was very fond of Mongke as well, and Mongke spent a considerable amount of his youth in Ogodei's *ordo*.

Mongke's military career began when he accompanied Ogodei and Tolui against the Jin Empire in 1230. Mongke began commanding armies during the invasion of the Kipchak steppes and the Rus' principalities. During these campaigns he served with great distinction against the Kipchaks, Alans, and Rus'. During this time he captured Bachman, the chief of the Kipchaks who nomadized along the Volga River. Mongke also took part in the siege of Kiev. During the campaign he not only honed his military skills but also developed a strong rapport with Batu.

This close relationship was pivotal in the rise of Mongke. After the death of Guyuk in 1248, the administration of the empire came to a halt, as the regent, Oghul Qaimish, Guyuk's wife, did very little and showed no intention of selecting a new khan. Seeing an opportunity and tired of the governmental malaise, Sorqoqtani and Batu plotted to overthrow her. They agreed to place Mongke on the throne in what became the Toluid Revolution.

A *quriltai* (meeting) was held in 1251. Although Batu did not attend, he provided 30,000 troops for security. In the meantime, Sorqoqtani procured the support of some of the princes from outside the Toluid and Jochid families. Thus, Mongke ascended the throne. He arrested Oghul Qaimish and accused her of a variety of crimes ranging from negligence of state matters to witchcraft. Indeed, the Mongols brought in special shamans in case of any magical threats.

Once on the throne, Mongke initiated a number of reforms to root out corruption within the bureaucracy. Unlike his predecessors, he was not generous. Those who were used to the lavish generosity of Ogodei would view Mongke as stingy. Mongke, however, was practical. After purging the government in the Toluid Revolution, he clamped down on exploitive practices used by *ortoqs*, who manipulated the *yam* system for their benefit. Additionally, he revised the tax system so that it became more practical and predictable. His greatest effort, however, was a census of the entire empire.



Mongke Khan (r. 1251–1259), fourth khaghan of the Mongol Empire. He was the first Great Khan from the Toluid line. In addition to sending his brothers to conquer China and the Middle East, Mongke also instituted reforms throughout the empire which improved its administration. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

Militarily, Mongke ordered two major invasions. His brother Hulegu invaded the Middle East to deal with the Assassins and the Abbasid Caliphate. Mongke then sought to complete the conquest of the Song Empire that began in 1234, but he had proceeded with little progress. Smaller armies also invaded Korea and Tibet. His brother Khubilai let the initial forces against the Song Empire. Mongke then led another army that crossed the Huanghe River in 1258. Mongke's forces did quite well under his command and captured the cities of Chengdu and Tongchuan along with multiple fortresses. He then moved against the important city of Hezhou in 1259. The siege began in typical fashion, as the Mongols surrounded the city with a palisade and began to bombard it with their siege engines. However, during the siege Mongke died. Unfortunately, it is not clear if he died from an arrow wound or from disease, such as cholera or dysentery, as the sources disagree on his ending.

Mongke's death set the stage for the breakup of the Mongol Empire. Khubilai and Ariq Boke, the youngest son of Tolui and brother to Mongke, Khubilai, and Hulegu both claimed the throne. A civil war erupted, and the western portions of the empire began to act on their own and fight their own disputes, thus ending the unity of the empire.

Mongke, as was the case with most Mongol nobility, had several wives and concubines. His senior wife was Qutuqtai Khatun, who gave him two sons, Baltu and Urung-tash. Qutuqtai also gave birth to a daughter, Bayalun. His favorite wife, however, was Oghul Qoymish, an Oirat. Rashid al-Din indicates that she was a domineering woman and called Hulegu and Khubilai "sons" and that they feared her. William of Rubruck, however, noted that it was apparent that Mongke loved her very much. With her Mongke had two daughters, Shirin and Bichqa. Two of his concubines also appear in the sources. Baya'ujin produced a son named Shiragi. Baya'ujin became his concubine after her father stole a bowstring from the armory. He became smitten with her when she came to her father's execution. The other concubine was Kuitani, with whom Mongke had one son, Asutai, who joined his half brother Ariq Boke in the civil war against Khubilai Khan. When Mongke died, both Qutuqtai and Oghul Qaimish had already died. His youngest wife, Chubei, accompanied his coffin back to her *ordo*. She, however, died a month later.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Ordo; Yam; *Individuals:* Hulegu; Khubilai Khan; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; Sorqoqtani-Beki; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Alans; Kipchaks; Oirat; *Ortoq; Key Events:* Teb Tenggeri, Death of; Toluid Revolution; William of Rubruck, Journey of; *Primary Documents:* Document 17; Document 22; Document 23

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Oghul Qaimish Khatun (d. 1251)

Oghul Qaimish Khatun, wife of Guyuk Khan (ca. 1206–1248), acted as regent of the Mongol Empire after her husband's death in 1248. While little is known about her life, chroniclers recounted that she was an unpopular regent and universally portrayed her in a negative light. She was a Merkit and was given to Guyuk as a wife around 1219 by Chinggis Khan. She bore him two sons, Khoja and Naqu. When Guyuk died in 1248, Oghul Qaimish brought his body back to his pastures near the Emil River. As a *quriltai* would take months to organize, Batu and the other Chinggisid princes agreed to permit Oghul Qaimish to serve a regent.

By and large, Oghul Qaimish Khatun neglected her duties in managing imperial affairs, especially as she failed to call a *quriltai* to elect a legitimate successor to the throne. Friar William of Rubruck, who visited the Mongol court of Mongke Khan (1209–1259) at Karakorum in 1254, reported that Oghul Qaimish was defamed for practicing witchcraft and that her ineffective regency ruined the political prospects of her immediate family. Such reports helped to justify the changing line of succession in the empire, since Oghul Qaimish represented the last regent of the Ogodeid line as the widow of Ogodei Khan's son Guyuk Khan. The Toluid branch of the imperial family ultimately tried and executed Oghul Qaimish Khatun for witchcraft so that the line of succession permanently shifted to the sons of Tolui (1192–1232), Ogodei Khan's brother.

Oghul Qaimish Khatun devoted little effort to promoting her sons' political careers, nor did she support their candidacy as heirs to the khanship, unlike her mother-in-law Toregene Khatun (r. 1242–1246). Oghul Qaimish Khatun and her sons held separate courts rather than forming a united front with common political aims, which was an unusual political stance for a female regent. Furthermore, she failed to call a *quriltai* to put forth any candidate for the succession. Both of these factors marked her regency as unorthodox, and her inattention to succession issues stood at odds with common protocol, since women could not hold permanent power as rulers. Imperial family members and officials expected regents to maintain order and manage the affairs of state until a male successor could be officially named. Consequently, Mongol elites deemed her derelict in her duties as regent due to her lack of attention to these matters.

Persian accounts criticized Oghul Qaimish Khatun for giving too much attention to merchants, but this in itself was not unusual, since merchant activity played a vital role in the economics of the empire, and many merchants held positions of influence and

close ties to the Mongol court. They served as commercial agents whose activities were oftentimes sponsored by the imperial family. Furthermore, they provided vital information to rulers and acted as governmental liaisons. However, Oghul Qaimish's commercial activities likely conflicted with common notions of shared familial access to the power and wealth of the empire. This is especially notable since she did not actively cultivate political favor among Mongol elites through the redistribution of wealth. She deviated from standard practices utilized for maintaining political alliances, namely gift-giving practices that cemented political alliances. She also failed to promote economic stability within the empire. When economic crises unfolded, officials and imperial family members blamed Oghul Qaimish, as the authority figure ultimately responsible for the welfare of the empire. Therefore, economic problems and a lack of political finesse negatively impacted Oghul Qaimish's reign.

Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252), the wife of Tolui, took advantage of these opportunities to further the prospects of her own sons during this period of political uncertainty. As Oghul Qaimish lost prestige due to her lack of leadership and as she failed to support a candidate for succession, other members of the imperial family took power for themselves. The empire nearly fell into a state of chaos due to the succession crisis and rampant economic instability and as rumors of plots abounded. As a result, Oghul Qaimish lost power for herself and ensured that her sons lost their political legitimacy as well. This state of political disarray ended when Sorqoqtani-Beki and her son Mongke spearheaded Oghul Qaimish's trial for witchcraft. As part of her investigation, she was stripped naked to humiliate her, but she remained defiant. As punishment for her alleged crimes, Oghul Qaimish was bound in felt and thrown into a river, where she drowned. She suffered the same fate as her mother-in-law's handmaiden, Fatima, who was also drowned when found guilty of witchcraft. The Mongols took accusations of witchcraft very seriously as an offense punishable by death. Such accusations provided a convenient mechanism for disposing of unpopular rivals. In this way the disgrace and death of Oghul Qaimish greatly benefited Sorqoqtani-Beki and her son Mongke, who became the next great khan of the Mongol Empire. This caused the line of succession to permanently shift to the Toluid branch of the imperial family. Consequently, female regents of the prior Ogodeid line, such as Oghul Qaimish, were not remembered fondly by future Toluid court chroniclers.

Donna Hamil

WITCHCRAFT TRIALS AND EXECUTIONS BY DROWNING

The Mongols generally abhorred spilling blood when carrying out formal executions. This was the case with Oghul Qaimish Khatun, who was drowned in a river after she was tried by the Toluids and found guilty of witchcraft. However, Oghul Qaimish was not the only member of the imperial household who met this end. Previously, other servants of the imperial household were also executed in this manner. Fatima, the handmaiden of Toregene Khatun, suffered this same fate after she was tried for witchcraft by Guyuk Khan. Shera, the royal cupbearer who originally accused Fatima of witchcraft, eventually faced the same cycle of accusation, torture, confession, and execution via drowning in a river.

See also: *Government and Politics:* Toregene Khatun; *Individuals:* Guyuk; Mongke Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki

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Ogodei Khan (1186–1241)

Ogodei Khan, son of Chinggis Khan, ruled from 1229 to 1241 as the second great khan of the Mongol Empire. He continued his father's mission of conquest and contributed to the expansion of the empire. Under Ogodei's leadership the Mongols promoted an ideology of world conquest that continued even after his death. To support the expansion of the empire, Ogodei improved the administrative apparatus of the Mongol state and built the capital city of Karakorum in 1235. After his death in 1241, internal strife was rampant within the imperial family, and struggles over succession illustrated the developing rivalries that eventually divided imperial family members into warring political factions.

After the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227 the empire was divided territorially between Ogodei and his brothers, with Ogodei inheriting the territory east and northeast of Lake Balkhash. The vastness of the empire required a division of power, but all territories remained united under the rule of one supreme ruler. Chinggis Khan chose Ogodei to rule, but this did not mean that his succession was ensured. Chinggis Khan's eldest son, Jochi, was not chosen to rule, because Chinggis Khan's second son, Chagatai, protested that Jochi's paternity was questionable. This accusation caused friction between the brothers to escalate. To make peace between Jochi and Chagatai, Chinggis Khan selected his third son, Ogodei, as his successor. Due to these circumstances, Ogodei obtained the title of great khan at the *quriltai*, or election, held near the Kerulen River in 1229.

Even before his ascendancy to power, Ogodei assisted his father in some of the early conquests that formed the foundations of the empire, particularly against the Jin in China. However, Mongol expansionist policies focused on Southwest Asia as well, so Ogodei also actively participated in his father's conquest of the Khwarazmian Empire, located along the Syr Darya River in the region of Mawarannahr. The conquest of the Khwarazmians began in 1218 with the Otrar Massacre. This led Chinggis Khan to declare war against the Khwarazmians in 1219. He divided military command among his



Ogodei Khan (r. 1229–1241) was the third son of Chinggis Khan and the second ruler of the Mongol Empire. He finished the conquest of the Jin Empire and initiated conquest of the western steppes and the invasion of Europe. This portrait of ink and watercolor on silk is found in the National Palace, Taipei, Taiwan. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

was economically prosperous by offering merchants high prices for their goods. He then redistributed this wealth by presenting visiting dignitaries and officials with lavish gifts.

In December 1241 Ogodei Khan died of alcoholism. His excessive consumption of alcohol was widely known within imperial circles, and many attempts were made to limit his drinking. Ogodei Khan's brother Chagatai even appointed an official to oversee and limit Ogodei's alcohol intake. As a result, Ogodei was only allowed a specific number of alcoholic drinks each day. However, he worked around these restrictions by simply drinking from larger cups. In spite of these interventions, Ogodei continued to drink excessively until he was finally found dead in his bed. Ogodei Khan's death ushered in a period of internal political division that would only continue to grow with time. His widow, Toregene Khatun, acted as regent from 1244 to 1246, and she also ignored Ogodei's instructions regarding the succession. Ogodei initially wanted his third son, Kuchu, to succeed him; however, Kuchu was killed in battle while fighting the Song in 1236. Chinggis Khan had previously suggested Ogodei's second son, Koten, for the succession,

sons Chagatai and Ogodei, and they took the city of Otrar after besieging it for months, thus beginning a destructive period of conquest in Central Asia. During Ogodei's lifetime the empire continued to expand, with northern China, Korea, Armenia, and Russian territories incorporated and with Mongol troops raiding as far away as Hungary. However, upon Ogodei's death in 1241, Mongol forces withdrew from Hungary and returned home, sparing Europe from outright conquest.

While the Mongol conquests resulted in destruction for many cities that refused to submit to Mongol authority, Mongol rule actually heralded improvements in some areas. For example, Ogodei mandated the digging of wells in the Gobi desert. He also expanded the *yam*, or postal relay system, originally instituted by Chinggis Khan so that by 1234 posts were spaced approximately a day's journey apart across the empire. Perhaps most significantly, Ogodei ensured that his new capital city at Karakorum

but due to poor health Kotei was passed over. Ogodei finally decided that Kuchu's son, Shiremun, should succeed him, but he lacked widespread political support. After Ogodei's death, his widow, Toregene Khatun, had other candidates in mind. With her assistance, Ogodei's eldest son, Guyuk, was elected to the khanship in 1246, only to die young in 1248. After Guyuk's death his own widow, Oghul Qaimish, acted as regent, despite the fact that she was extremely unpopular. She was ultimately executed as a result of the Toluid coup that changed the line of succession within the imperial family, making her the last of the Ogodeid rulers of the Mongol Empire. In the end, the struggles for power that began after the death of Ogodei Khan only continued to escalate over the years until they eventually threatened the stability and unity of the empire in later years.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; Toregene Khatun; *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; *Yam;* *Individuals:* Chagatai Khan; Chinggis Khan; Guyuk; Jochi; Tolui Khan; *Key Events:* Otrar Massacre; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Song Empire; Khwarazmian Empire

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Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316)

Ghiyath al-Din Muhammad Khudabandah Oljeitu was the eighth ruler of the Il-Khanate and the second son of the fourth il-khan, Arghun Khan. Born in 1282, Oljeitu, then known by the peculiar name Kharbandah (meaning “muleteer”), spent his early childhood at the il-khan court (*ordu*) in northwestern Iran before his brother, Ghazan, assumed the throne in 1295. Ghazan named Oljeitu his viceroy of Khurasan shortly after his coronation, and the young prince remained in the east of the realm until Ghazan's death in 1304, when he was summoned to assume the throne of the Il-Khanate, as stipulated by his late brother's will.

Oljeitu's reign was praised by the Persian sources of the time as a period of great peace and stability in the Il-Khanate, during which time the rulers of the four Mongolian successor states (the Golden Horde, the Yuan Empire, the Chagatai Khanate, and

OLJEITU'S TOMB

Several hundred meters away from the palace in Sultaniyya stood Oljeitu's tomb, an enormous structure that still dominates the landscape of Sultaniyya for miles around today. The tomb was surrounded by 12 enormous walls, designed to mimic the Ka'aba in Mecca and the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. The walls were painted with sacred verses and the names of prophets and saints. The tomb was capped by an enormous dome with four doors leading out to the roof, which were designed to represent the eight gates of heaven.

the Il-Khanate) were reconciled and ceased the bitter internecine war that had divided the Mongol Empire in conflict since the death of the great khan Mongke in 1259. Yet the chronicles and biographical dictionaries written in the territory of the Mamluk Empire state that Oljeitu's relationship with his subjects was strained by the il-khan's decision to convert to Shia Islam sometime around 1309. Moreover, modern-day historians have often viewed Oljeitu's reign as a time of decadence, when the Il-Khanate began its slow decline into extinction.

Oljeitu worked hard to reconcile his dynasty with the Islamic Persian political traditions of his subjects. He presented himself as an enlightened philosopher-king whose rule would bring civilization and prosperity to all corners of his empire. He gave generous stipends to writers, teachers, and philosophers throughout his empire to turn his court into the cultural center of the Islamic world.

Oljeitu's attempts to spread his influence through patronage of scholars, artists, and theologians were not accompanied by any serious military expansion. In 1306 he sent an army to incorporate the small yet important province of Gilan, on the southern coast of the Caspian Sea, into his realm. Yet the terrain of the province proved too difficult for his armies to overcome, and when the native population sought to defend themselves through guerrilla tactics and sabotage, Oljeitu was forced to withdraw. A separate campaign against the Levant in 1311 ended in similar disappointment when the il-khan called off the campaign, having failed to capture the border fortress of al-Rahba. He was far more successful in conquering the town of Herat (in modern-day Afghanistan), whose ruler, Malik Fakhr al-Din Kart, had refused to present himself at court after Oljeitu's coronation. Oljeitu besieged and captured the city, bringing it under central government control. But the siege was both long and costly and claimed the life of one of Oljeitu's most senior commanders, Danishmand Bahadur, and dramatically weakened the economy of the town.

Oljeitu courted controversy, particularly among authors writing in the hostile Mamluk Sultanate, for his unusually eclectic spiritual beliefs. He had been exposed to a variety of religions during his youth and later at the cosmopolitan il-khan court. It is almost certain that Oljeitu's deeply Buddhist father, Arghun, would have instructed him in the main doctrines of his faith during his early years. But his mother, Uruk Khatun, was a devout Nestorian Christian and insisted on Oljeitu being baptized by the Nestorian catholicos of

Maraghah, Mar Yahballah III, who recounted the young Oljeitu playing in his churchyard as a boy. Yet Mar Yahballah later lamented that after Oljeitu had been appointed to govern Khurasan, he had been exposed to much stronger Muslim influences and converted to Islam, possibly under instruction from a Sufi sheikh, since Oljeitu showed great reverence for the shrines of Sufi saints such as Sheikh Bayazid Bistami and Sheikh Abu Said b. Abu al-Khayr. After Oljeitu assumed the throne, his vizier, Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah, sought to convert Oljeitu to the Shafa'i sect of Sunni Islam before he finally converted to Shiism. His biographer, Abu al-Qasim Qashani, states that Oljeitu permitted his courtiers to retain their own beliefs after his conversion to Shiism, but several sources claim that he ordered the call to prayer in the major cities of his empire to be made in the Shiite fashion, causing civil unrest and tension with the various spiritual leaders of his realm. The Hanbali sheikh of Damascus, Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya, saw Oljeitu's conversion to Shiism as strong justification for opposing Mongol rule in the Levant and Egypt, and he preached tirelessly for the defense of the region against the Il-Khanid army.

Oljeitu's reign was in many respects the beginning of the end of the Il-Khanate. His realm was both stable and prosperous for most of his rule, yet he never succeeded in imposing his authority over his brother's generals. Toward the end of his reign, senior commanders in both Khurasan and Anatolia are mentioned violently exploiting the sedentary population for revenue at the expense of the regional treasury. These same magnates increased their authority during the rule of Oljeitu's son and heir, Abu Said, meddling in the affairs of the realm and weakening the power of the central government. When Abu Said died in 1335, these commanders divided the Il-Khanate into a series of competing emirates, effectively ending Chinggisid rule in the Middle East.

Michael Hope

See also: *Government and Politics:* Sultaniyya; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Ghazan; Mongke Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks; Nestorian Christians; *Key Events:* Mongol Conversion to Islam; *Primary Documents:* Document 44

OLJEITU'S PATRONAGE OF SCHOLARS

Some of the most important sources on il-khan history, such as the *Jami' al-Tawarikh* of Rashid al-Din Fadl Allah and the *Tarikh-i Wassaf* of Wassaf-i Hadrat, were either completed or presented at his court. Indeed, the pride of his new city, Sultaniyya, was to be the Siyara Madrassa, which was intended to be the grandest university of its time. Its teachers were drawn from each of the religious sects and juridical traditions of Islam, including the previously marginalized Twelver Shiites. The famous Shiite theologian and scholar 'Alama Jamal al-Din Hasan Ibn al-Mutahhar al-Hilli was one of the most notable teachers at the Siyara, where he published a now lost introductory text on the tenets of Shiite Islam titled *Tasdirnama*. He later dedicated another of his works on Shiite doctrine, the *Minhaj al-Karama al-Imamiyya*, to Oljeitu himself. Oljeitu made use of the Siyara Madrassa and his grand capital, Sultaniyya, to project his authority throughout the Middle East.

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Orghina Khatun (d. 1261)

We do not know much about Orghina Khatun's early life, but Rashid al-Din mentions that she was the daughter of Toralchi, one of the sons of Qutuqa Beki, the ruler of the Oirat people during Chinggis Khan's lifetime. Like other women belonging to one of the tribes (people) conquered by Chinggis Khan in Mongolia, she was incorporated into the Chinggisid royal family by marrying Qara Hulegu (d. 1252), grandson of Chagatai by his son Mo'etuken (d. 1221). If we believe Rashid al-Din's account, Orghina's husband was named heir of the realm during Chagatai's lifetime. Despite her marriage to the Chagataid branch of the Mongols, she maintained important family connections with other Mongol factions because she was the stepsister of Qutui Khatun and Guyuk Khatun, both wives of Hulegu, son of Tolui, son of Chinggis Khan. However, a probably more beneficial family connection in her life came with the marriage of her aunt Oghul Qaimish to the future great khan Mongke (r. 1251–1259).

Sources tell us very little about Orghina's life prior to her accession to the throne. However, her name is mentioned several times in relation to political developments of the Chagataid *ulus* after the death of Chagatai in 1244. Rashid al-Din mentions that she was held in high esteem by her grandfather-in-law, and once he passed away her husband, Qara Hulegu, became the ruler of the *ulus*. The transition appears to have been peaceful at this stage and remained so during the regency of Toregene Khatun (r. 1242–1246). Yet problems arose once Guyuk was named grand khan in 1246 and decided to appoint his friend and fellow drinker Yesu Mongke (son of Chagatai and uncle of Qara Hulegu) as ruler of the Central Asian *ulus*. The displacement of Qara Hulegu from office created internal enmities in the Chagatai *ulus* that in a way mirrored the internal confrontation that the empire was experiencing under Guyuk Khan, with the Ogodeids fighting the Jochids and Toluids and the Chagataids divided between Yesu Mongke's alliance with the former and Qara Hulegu's alliance with the latter. It is in this period of turmoil across the empire that Orghina emerges as a political figure in Central Asia.

It is unclear where Orghina was or what she did between the removal of her husband from the throne and the ascension of Mongke Khan to the Great Khanate. However, when the latter took control of the united Mongol Empire, one of his commands was to give back the government of Central Asia to Orghina's husband Qara Hulegu. The great khan issued a *jarliq* commanding that Yesu Mongke be removed from the throne in the *ulus* of Chagatai and be executed by Qara Hulegu. However, Orghina's husband died on

the way, and the responsibility for carrying out the khan's order now rested on her shoulders. She did not seem to have hesitated in executing Yesu Mongke and assuming the responsibility of the government. The vacant throne of the Chagatai Khanate was given to Mubarak Shah (d. 1266), the son of Orghina, but because he was an infant, the government of the *ulus* was administered by her as a regent in the name of her son.

Orghina's rule lasted for nine years (1251–1260), which coincides with the time in which her uncle Mongke Khan was in charge of the united Mongol Empire. We lack detailed information regarding the administration of Central Asia during Orghina's reign. The overall account of this period found in the sources is of a peaceful time, with no reports of upheavals in the region for most of her years in command. As was the case for many other nomadic women bearing political responsibilities, she carried out diplomatic duties to secure her position in power. Possibly with this in mind, she organized a banquet reception for Hulegu when he passed through her territories on the way to the conquest of Iran and the Middle East in the early 1250s. According to Barthold, she ruled from this city of Almaliq in eastern Turkestan, between the modern-day city of Yinnin in China and the border of the Republic of Kazakhstan, but no further information on her government policies has come down to us. The Chagataid *ulus* resurfaces as a main area of conflict in the sources after the death of Mongke Khan and the outbreak of the Toluid civil war between Ariq Boke and Khubilai Khan.

As part of the conflict, Ariq Boke sent one of his followers, named Alghu, to take control of Central Asia for his cause against his brother. Alghu arrived in 1261 and deposed Orghina from the throne, forcing her to leave her territories and go to Mongolia to complain in front of Ariq Boke. Meanwhile, Alghu stayed in control of the *ulus* and decided to betray Ariq Boke by killing his officials in the area and siding with Khubilai in the conflict. Ariq Boke tried to resolve the situation by sending Orghina back to Central Asia to bring Alghu and the *ulus* back to his side. Some sort of agreement was reached by which Alghu stayed in power but had to marry Orghina to obtain the necessary legitimacy to be recognized as ruler of the Chagataid Khanate. Khubilai was triumphant in the conflict with his brother in 1264, and only two years later Alghu died, leaving Orghina again in control of Central Asia. This time, though, she decided to place her son Mubarak Shah on the throne, possibly in anticipation of her death, which occurred later that year, in 1266. So, 15 years passed since her marriage to Qara Hulegu and her death. In this period, she was recognized as the supreme authority of the realm, administrating it peacefully for almost a decade and managing to secure the succession of her son.

Bruno De Nicola

See also: *Government and Politics:* Toregene Khatun; *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; *Ulus;* *Individuals:* Chagatai Khan; Guyuk; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; *Groups and Organizations:* Oirat

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Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324)

An iconic figure of the late Middle Ages, Marco Polo traveled from his native Venice to China, where he remained for 17 years. Upon his return to Europe, he wrote the *Travels of Marco Polo*, one of the most acclaimed and controversial pieces of travel literature ever published.

Polo was born circa 1254 in Venice, one of the most successful trading cities of medieval Europe. His family owned and managed a successful mercantile concern and had engaged in trade with several Middle Eastern administrations for generations. Little is known about the early life of Polo, but he was raised with the absence of his father, Niccolò Polo, until he was about 15. That was due to his father’s travels with his brother and business partner, Maffeo, to the Byzantine court in Constantinople, up the Volga River and toward Bukhara, and to the Mongol court of Shangdu, where they became ambassadors to Khubilai Khan. Khubilai Khan sent them back to Europe, hoping for their return with diplomatic greetings from the pope.

Indeed, it was his father’s position as a servant of the khan that provided Marco Polo with his first taste of adventure. The elder Polos had returned to Venice around 1269 and were meant to return to Khubilai Khan, but complications with the papal succession prevented them from leaving until 1271. When they finally departed, they took the young Marco Polo with them. Stopping to acquire a gift for the khan, blessed oil, they reached Hormuz by the end of 1272.

Struck by illness, the Polos traveled on until they reached Badakhshan in Afghanistan, where they remained for approximately a year, enjoying the pleasant climate and the hospitable people and recuperating from what was probably malaria. When they finally left Badakhshan, the Polos traveled to the Silk Road, following it out of the Islamic lands and into China. Slowed down by their curiosity and some detours, the Polos finally reached the court of the Mongols at Shangdu in about 1275.

When they arrived at Shangdu, Khubilai Khan was pleased with their gifts and their service, and the Polos remained in his employ for approximately 17 years. It is during this period that Marco Polo engaged in his travels through China. This was accomplished in part by the relationship he formed with Khubilai Khan, who trusted the young man so much that he sent him out on many expeditions, including trips to Yunnan and Burma. Polo was an accomplished linguist who spoke several dialects, including Turkish and Mongol, further impressing the khan and his fellow courtiers.



Marco Polo wasn't the first European to travel through the Mongol Empire, but he is the most famous. His journey to the Mongol Empire via caravan is depicted in this detail from the Catalan Atlas by Abraham Cresques (1325–1387). (Leemage/Corbis)

In about 1292 the Polos left the court of Khubilai Khan, serving as escorts for a Mongol princess betrothed to a Il-Khanid khan. That journey took them not by land, as their previous trip had done, but by sea. Thus, they visited many of the Malay islands as well as Vietnam and Sumatra, where they sojourned for five months. They then stopped off in Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), journeyed up the western Indian coast, and finally delivered the princess to Khorasan. The Polos then set off for Europe but were robbed of their possessions in Trebizond. When they finally arrived in Venice in 1295, their family was in for a tremendous shock. Because the Polos had been gone for so long with no word, the family had given up hope that they were alive. Their reunion was therefore acclaimed throughout Venice.

After his return to Venice, Marco Polo took part in a sea battle for his city against the Genoese and was captured as a prisoner of war. While in prison, he shared a cell with a romance writer named Rusticiano. Polo used his time with his new friend to dictate his adventures. The end result was *Il Milione*, translated into English as the *Travels of Marco Polo*. Written in Franco-Italian, the book detailed Polo's memories of his amazing adventures throughout Asia. Upon his release, Polo made his book available, and many read it with awe. However, controversy also surrounded the book from the beginning.

Although the book achieved great fame and popularity within Polo's lifetime, many did not believe his account and challenged the truth of his reminiscences. That controversy

has continued to the present day, and it is complicated by the fact that while nearly 150 versions of the text exist, no original copies are extant. However, most modern-day scholars do believe that Polo accomplished his travels and that his account has much basis in truth. Perhaps its greatest legacy is that it inspired other Europeans to explore beyond the known limits of their experience, contributing to the earliest rumblings of the era of discovery.

In his later years, Polo himself revised copies of *Il Milione* and continued to manage the fortune of his family. He died on January 8, 1324, in Venice. His life remains a classic example of adventure, travel, and exploration.

Nancy Stockdale

See also: *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; *Primary Documents:* Document 25; Document 27; Document 29; Document 30; Document 31; Document 32; Document 33; Document 34; Document 35; Document 36; Document 37; Document 38; Document 39; Document 40; Document 45

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Qaidu (1230–1301)

Qaidu was a grandson of Ogodei who dominated Central Asia after the dissolution of the Mongol Empire. Qaidu survived the purges of the Toluid Revolution, as he was too young to be of any threat. Thus, he was left in his pastures around Qayaliq, between the Emil and Ili Rivers. Initially in the war between Ariq Boke and Khubilai, Qaidu remained neutral. He may have sympathized with Ariq Boke in terms of being true to the nomadic heritage. Even though Qaidu supported Ariq Boke, Khubilai does not appear to have begrudged him. Qaidu, however, emerged as a major rival and threat to Khubilai Khan. Qaidu's feud with Khubilai arose because of Khubilai's support of Alghu and Alghu's expansion into Qaidu's appanage.

Alghu, a Chagatai prince, established his control of the Chagatai Khanate and then sought to expand. With the final defeat of Ariq Boke in 1264, there was no one to check Alghu's ambition, so Qaidu formed an alliance with Berke. Berke, occupied with his war against the Il-Khanate, provided what aid he could to Qaidu with a promise that he would support Qaidu's claim to any territory or people taken from Alghu. Jochid support was imperative. With the Toluid Revolution, the Ogodeiyid territories had not only been reduced, but many of the princes were purged and their troops redistributed through the empire. Qaidu was at a severe disadvantage, as he lacked the troops and resources to withstand Alghu.

With Berke's reinforcements, Qaidu successfully defeated Alghu in one battle but lost the next. Indeed, it appeared that Qaidu was on the ropes, but a series of timely

deaths intervened and reversed Qaidu's fortunes. Alghu died in 1265/1266. Qaidu immediately took advantage of Alghu's death and expanded westward to the Talas River and perhaps to the Syr Darya and then pushed east. This attracted Khubilai's attention. Khubilai's armies forced Qaidu to abandon most of his eastern conquests by 1268. With Khubilai's aggressive defense of his borders, Qaidu opted for strategic depth and made the Talas region his headquarters. Even though he retreated, Qaidu's activities found support among many of the former supporters of Ariq Boke who took refuge with him and augmented his forces. While Khubilai checked his advances into modern-day Xinjiang, he could not dislodge Qaidu from power. This began a decades-long border war in that region, but Qaidu also intervened elsewhere, taking advantage of the problems that arose from the deaths of Alghu, Hulegu, and Berke.

After the death of Alghu, Khubilai sought to place Baraq Khan as the new ruler of the Chagatai Khanate and to open a new front against Qaidu. Khubilai promised Baraq all of Qaidu's territory. Baraq defeated Qaidu initially, but in 1267 the two fought a major battle at Khojand, located along the Syr Darya, in which Qaidu inflicted a devastating defeat on Baraq with Jochid reinforcements sent by Berke's successor, Mongke Timur. Baraq retreated to Mawarannahr to regroup and plundered Samarkand and Bukhara to fund a new army. Their conflict was ended through mediation with the Peace of Qatwan later that year.

The main outcome of the Peace of Qatwan was that Qaidu's new state took shape. With the defeat and death of Baraq and Mawarannahr under his control, Qaidu now held a *quriltai* in which he was crowned as khan in September 1271, one month after Baraq's death. Qaidu did not attempt to claim to be the *khaghan* (great khan) even though he opposed Khubilai. Qaidu may have eschewed the title to avoid difficulties with the Jochids as well; friction between Mongke Timur and Qaidu already existed.

Most of the Chagatayids acquiesced to Qaidu, as he did not claim to be their khan but had the right to appoint one as Guyuk once did. There was some resistance from the heirs of Alghu and Baraq. Qaidu split them by making Du'a, Baraq's second son, the Chagatayid khan in 1282. Du'a's acceptance of Qaidu's suzerainty finally ended the conflict in Mawarannahr. With the loss of their allies, Alghu's heirs took refuge in Khubilai's domains in 1283.

Tensions also remained with the Il-Khanate because Qaidu raided its borders. Abaqa retaliated by invading Mawarannahr in 1273, sacking Bukhara. He did not seek to occupy the region, but the invasion was a clear warning to Qaidu not incur his wrath. This appears to have achieved the intended results, as Qaidu professed friendship with Abaqa. Most of Qaidu's attention, however, went to consolidating his hold over the Chagatayid realm and attacking Khubilai. It is for this role that Qaidu is best known, and the majority of the 41 major battles he fought were connected to undermining Khubilai.

Qaidu's success demonstrated that even though Khubilai invested heavily in the region in both manpower and infrastructure (governmental and physical), this did not guarantee control. The massive financial expenditure amounted to little success, as Qaidu's border now reached Qara Qocho, and his influence extended into Beshbaliq,

Kashgar, and Khotan by 1290. Rebellions in Manchuria and Tibet and his own withdrawal from affairs prevented Khubilai from dealing with Qaidu in more than a reactionary manner. Meanwhile, Qaidu continued to nibble away at the frontier, including incursions into Mongolia. His approach on Qaraqorum roused Khubilai, who had successfully crushed Prince Nayan's rebellion in Manchuria, to lead an army to Mongolia. Qaidu abandoned Qaraqorum and retreated. Fearful of losing Mongolia, Khubilai stationed the great general Bayan in Qaraqorum to direct the defense of Mongolia. Despite several small battles between 1290 and 1293, Bayan achieved little success against Qaidu. However, his replacement, Tuq Tuqa, successfully drove Qaidu out of the Yenesei region. Khubilai appeared willing to accept losses in the contested areas around Uyghurstan to secure Mongolia, which was essential to his own legitimacy as *khaghan*.

Even after Khubilai's death Qaidu maintained pressure on the great khan's empire, and only Qaidu's death in 1301 ended the war. Qaidu, however, found Temur Oljeitu to be a more stalwart opponent. Unlike Khubilai, he gave his western frontiers proper attention instead of foreign conquests. At least seven sizable garrisons were established along this frontier stretching from the Upper Yenesei to the Tarim Basin. At one point in 1298 there was even a proposal by Bayan, the khan of the Blue Horde, that Yuan, Jochid, and Il-Khanid forces should attack Qaidu's realm. Temur Oljeitu, however, declined, pleased with the defense of his borders and more interested in consolidating his authority over the Yuan Empire. Other events changed his attitude. Qaidu apparently learned of the proposal but perhaps not Temur Oljeitu's response. After this, Temur Oljeitu began to plan an invasion. The invasion began in 1300 with a series of battles that permitted the Yuan forces to penetrate the Altai region. The major encounter took place in the autumn of 1301 near Mount Teijiangu on the southern edge of the Altai

QUTULUN

Qutulun was the daughter of Qaidu. While the Mongolian queens were remarkable for their role in politics and their independent nature, the beautiful Qutulun stood out among even the most remarkable queens. Not only did she serve as a trusted counselor for her father, but she also commanded men in battle. Qutulun also demonstrated great ability in wrestling, vowing to never marry a man until she could be defeated. Her suitors had to offer herds of animals to demonstrate their seriousness in their pursuit of Qutulun's affection. It is said that Qaidu's flocks and herds grew exponentially due to his daughter's prowess. Qutulun did, however, marry. She remained involved in politics. Although as a woman she could not succeed her father to the throne, she supported her brother, Orus, who would have allowed her to retain her status as a general and an adviser. He, however, was defeated. With his defeat, Qutulun withdrew from politics and cared for her father's mausoleum. Qutulun's retirement was short-lived. With the demise of Qaidu, Du'a, the ruler of the Chagatai Khanate, asserted his authority over Qaidu's line and purged most of his sons as well as Qutulun and her family.

Mountains. The Yuan forces commanded by Khaishan, the future Yuan emperor, won a decisive victory, but Qaidu regrouped and was joined by Du'a. Thus reinforced, Qaidu and Du'a met the Yuan army at Qara Qada, located on the banks of the Irtysh River. In a two-day battle Qaidu emerged victorious, and Khaishan led the Yuan army back to Qaraqorum, burning the steppe behind them to prevent Qaidu from following. It is not clear whether Khaishan's tactic prevented Qaidu from following or whether it was because he suffered too many losses. In the end it did not matter, as Qaidu died not long afterward.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Mongol Empire, Dissolution of; Khubilai Becomes Khan; Temur Khan; *Organization and Administration:* Blue Horde; Chagatai Khanate; Golden Horde; Mawarannahr; *Individuals:* Oljeitu; *Key Events:* Peace of Qatwan; Toluid Revolution

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Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252)

Sorqoqtani-Beki, a Nestorian Christian of the Kereit tribe, married Tolui Khan (d. 1232), who was the youngest son of Chinggis Khan by his principal wife Borte. Sorqoqtani-Beki was also known by the name Berüde Begi. Her father, Jaqa Gambu, a Kereit nobleman, was the brother of Toghril, or Ong Khan, ruler of the Kereit tribe. After Chinggis Khan conquered the Kereit, he gave Sorqoqtani-Beki in marriage to his son Tolui and took her sister Ibaqa-Beki as his own wife. Chinggis Khan allowed Sorqoqtani-Beki's father to retain control of his people even after the destruction of the rest of the Kereit tribe due to this close marriage tie. Sorqoqtani-Beki gave birth to four sons: Mongke Khan (d. 1259), Khubilai Khan (d. 1294), Hulegu (d. 1265), and Ariq Boke (d. 1266). Due to her keen political awareness, exemplary behavior, and good relations within the imperial family, she guaranteed the ascension of her sons to power after the Ogodeid successors fell from grace, with two of her sons, Mongke Khan and



Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252), wife of Tolui Khan, was one of the most powerful and influential women in the Mongol Empire. She was the mother of Mongke Khan, Khubilai Khan, Hulegu, and Ariq Boke. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

Khubilai Khan, becoming rulers of the Mongol Empire.

Although Sorqoqtani-Beki never served as a regent of the empire, she wielded power as the mother of contenders for succession to the throne of the Mongol Empire. As a Chinggisid daughter-in-law and *beki*, or princess, she actively influenced affairs of state. Her husband, Tolui, often overindulged in alcohol, and this made it necessary for him to rely on her decision-making skills. Sorqoqtani-Beki was intelligent, generous, and devoted to her family and actively supported the careers of her sons. Her political acumen allowed her to enjoy the loyalty of the Mongol military as well as that of foreign powers. During the period of instability and chaos that ensued between the reigns of Toregene Khatun and Oghul Qaimish, Sorqoqtani-Beki promoted the notion that the behavior of her sons was irreproachable. Her strict adherence to Mongol law and customs laid the foundation for her sons' future successes. After the execution of the Ogodeid regent Oghul Qaimish in 1251, the sons of Sorqoqtani-Beki and Tolui Khan rose to power, with the eldest, Mongke, succeeding

to the position of supreme khan. This change in the line of succession from the descendants of Ogodei to the descendants of Tolui was directly attributed to the political efforts of Sorqoqtani-Beki. The overwhelmingly positive historical accounts of Sorqoqtani-Beki and the universally negative accounts of other Ogodeid female regents, such as Toregene and Oghul Qaimish, can be partially attributed to the political tensions and propaganda surrounding this change in succession lines. In short, the victors wrote the history.

Persian historical accounts, especially those by Rashid al-Din, noted that Toregene Khatun and Oghul Qaimish were corrupt and ineffective rulers. Yet accounts described Sorqoqtani-Beki as an exemplar for proper behavior and as a model mother and

princess due to her virtue, modesty, and chastity. She oversaw the education of her sons and worked hard to maintain familial harmony among them and their wives. Most significantly, Sorqoqtani-Beki successfully navigated the internal politics of the various factions of the imperial family. She acted diplomatically and ruthlessly to safeguard the stability of the empire and the ascendancy of her sons. Furthermore, she wisely obtained the assistance of the general Batu (d. 1255) to help her achieve her goals. During the period of Oghul Qaimish's reign a succession crisis arose due to the regent's failure to endorse a candidate or to call for a proper *quriltai*, or election. At this juncture Sorqoqtani-Beki instructed her son Mongke to seize and arrest both the regent Oghul Qaimish and Qadaqach Khatun, the latter being the mother of Shiramun, another contender for the throne. Oghul Qaimish and Qadaqach Khatun were brought to the tent of Sorqoqtani-Beki and tried. Consequently, the Toluid court found Oghul Qaimish guilty of witchcraft, stripped her naked, wrapped her in felt, and threw her into a river to drown. After the Oghul Qaimish Khatun's disgraceful death, Sorqoqtani-Beki, with the help of Batu, ensured that her son Mongke was elected as the next ruler of the empire.

Sorqoqtani-Beki's actions provide a prime example of the roles played by elite women in the political machinations of the Mongol Empire as well as in determining the outcomes of the power struggles that were at play within the imperial family. Her reputation for supporting her sons, striving for familial harmony, and following the *yasa*, or Mongol law, to the letter made her a role model for elite Mongol women. Her status as a Nestorian Christian allowed her descendants to serve as touchstones for European Christian diplomatic efforts and conversion missions and also fueled legends of the existence of Prester John's mythical Christian kingdom in Central Asia.

One of the most significant aspects of Sorqoqtani-Beki's legacy was the role she played as mother to the rulers of the Mongol Empire at the height of its expansion. Her son Mongke Khan reigned as the next great khan of the empire. To rule over this vast territory, he appointed his brother Khubilai to administer China, which culminated in the expansion of Mongol authority in the East and the foundation the Yuan Khanate. Mongke Khan authorized his brother Hulegu to conquer territories in the West, which resulted in the fall of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad and the foundation of the Il-Khanate in its place. Even though universally positive accounts of Sorqoqtani-Beki should be considered critically, since her Toluid descendants were responsible for their dissemination, her legacy is still quite significant. As the orchestrator of her sons' political ascendance, she affected a permanent change in the imperial line of the succession, and thus the influence of Sorqoqtani-Beki on the politics of the Mongol Empire should not be underestimated.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Government and Politics:* Toregene Khatun; *Yasa;* *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* The Assassins; Kereit; *Key Events:* Toluid Revolution; *Key Places:* Abbasid Caliphate

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Timur-i Leng (1336–1405)

Known as Tamerlane in the Western world, Timur was born near Samarkand in the environs of Shahrisabz, located in modern-day Uzbekistan. Timur was a member of the Barlas tribe, a Turkicized Mongolian tribe. He began his career as a minor leader and sometimes bandit during the chaotic mid-14th century in Central Asia. During this period, he suffered wounds that paralyzed his right arm and leg, which earned the sobriquet Timur-i Leng, or Timur the Lamé (Tamerlane). His disability proved to be no impediment for him. As his power grew, he attempted to resurrect the Mongol Empire and almost accomplished this by establishing an empire that stretched from the Syr Darya to the Mediterranean while defeating the major powers of his day—the Mamluks, the Ottomans, the Sultanate of Delhi, and the Golden Horde—making him the greatest military leader of the 14th century and one of the most gifted leaders in history.

As the Chagatai Khanate's central authority declined in the mid-14th century, new opportunities appeared for those with ambition. Despite his injured right side, Timur thrived in the chaotic situation and became a lieutenant of his brother-in-law Amir Husain. Although they suffered a devastating loss against the Chagatayid Mongols in the Battle of the Mire in 1365, Husain and Timur drove the Chagatayids from Mawarannahr. Yet with victory came jealousy, as a rivalry arose between the two in 1370—Timur emerged as the victor.

Victory over Husain allowed Timur to consolidate his control over Mawarannahr while defending it from the Chagatai Mongols of Moghulistan who sought to restore their authority over Mawarannahr. Once he achieved stability in Mawarannahr, Timur became involved with a civil war in the Golden Horde. In 1380 he provided support to Toqtamysh, one of the contenders for the throne. Timur viewed Toqtamysh as a protégé and believed that with him on the throne of the Golden Horde, Timur's northern border would be secured.

With his northern borders now secure, Timur expanded across the Amu Darya in 1383, invading Khurasan. His armies continued to rampage across the former Il-Khanate Empire, now consisting of a number of smaller kingdoms. While he considered the regions of modern-day Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia part of his empire by

1394, Timur did not attempt to incorporate them into a true state, as he seemed to prefer plundering rather than collecting taxes.

Despite his success in the Middle East, Timur often returned to Mawarranahr to deal with external threats from the Chaghatayids of Moghulistan or even from his protégé, Toqtamysh, who began to challenge Timur's authority. This may also explain why Timur never truly incorporated his conquered territory. Twice, Timur had to abandon his wars in Iran as Toqtamysh invaded Mawarannahr in 1385 and 1388. Timur's arrival forced his protégé to retreat. Timur eventually defeated the Chinggisid prince near the forest of Kunduzcha in 1391 after pursuing him across the Syr Darya and into the Caspian steppes. Even though Timur defeated Toqtamysh, the latter escaped and rallied his forces to fight another day.

Then in 1395, Timur defeated Toqtamysh again at the Terek River for a final time. Toqtamysh again survived the battle, but Timur sacked his capitals of Sarai and New Sarai. This ruined Toqtamysh not only militarily but also economically. With the destruction of those important cities on the Volga, Timur shifted the trade routes south to his empire and away from his rival.

Nonetheless, Toqtamysh regained power and invaded Timur's empire again in 1395. Timur decided to finish the rivalry once and for all. He pursued Toqtamysh and finally caught him in a battle on the Kur River. Timur defeated him and then proceeded to break the power of the Golden Horde by inciting and supporting various contenders for the throne but making sure that none threatened his own power.

Although Timur effectively conquered the Golden Horde, he did not seek to incorporate it into his empire, perhaps realizing that as a non-Chinggisid prince, he would never be accepted as the ruler in that region. Thus, he settled for its continued but weakened existence. His attention then turned to India. In 1398, he invaded the Sultanate of Delhi. As he did for many campaigns, Timur justified his actions on religious grounds. His armies sacked and burned Delhi in a wanton display of destruction, but



Timur-i Leng, founder of the Timurid dynasty. Not a Chinggisid, Timur conquered much of the Chaghatayid Khanate and all of the Il-Khanate. He also contributed to the fall of the Golden Horde. This miniature from the 18th-century Smith manuscript, is found at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

TIMUR REMODELS SAMARKAND

With an army of disciplined horse archers in the traditional style of the Mongol Empire, plundering and conquest were quite easy for Timur. Augmented by infantry, sieges also posed no problems. Indeed, Timur often seemed to enjoy plundering his conquests rather than incorporating them into a rationally ruled empire. With an empire that extended from the Syr Darya to the Euphrates River to the Caucasus Mountains, he had a vast territory to plunder. With the booty that returned with him to Samarkand and Bukhara, Timur created a building boom with palaces, mosques, and mausoleums in these cities, which were then surrounded with new suburbs named after the cities Timur pillaged.

Timur, a Muslim, legitimized his invasion because of Sultan Mahmud Tughlak's toleration of his Hindu subjects. As always after a campaign, wealth from the plunder poured into Timur's capital at Samarkand.

Despite the massive haul of plunder, Timur did not remain at his capital. In 1399, he marched west against the Mamluk Sultanate in Egypt and Syria and the Ottoman Empire in Anatolia (modern-day Turkey). Both states had supported rebellions against Timur or threatened his vassals. After putting down a rebellion in Azerbaijan, Timur invaded Syria in 1401 and defeated the Mamluks, sacking Aleppo and Damascus in the process. At Damascus, he ransomed it once and then decided to plunder it after deeming the ransom insufficient. He then invaded Anatolia and defeated the Ottoman army at Ankara in 1402 and captured Sultan Bayazid, formerly known as the terror of Europe, leaving the Ottoman Empire in turmoil for the next 50 years.

With his western frontier now secure from the threat of attack, Timur returned to Samarkand in 1404. Despite being carried in a litter for most of his later campaigns, Timur did not plan a life of ease yet. Instead, he planned for an invasion of China, ruled by the Ming dynasty. The invasion ended prematurely, as Timur died on January 19, 1405, in the city of Otrar. Although he had designated a successor, his empire, held together primarily through the force of his will, quickly disintegrated into smaller states ruled by his sons and grandsons.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; Golden Horde; Khurasan; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 47

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Tolui Khan (1191–1232)

Tolui had just come of age by the time Chinggis Khan unified Mongolia and is mentioned regularly in the sources after the *quriltai* of 1206. Prior to that, Tolui is mentioned only twice. Once he was almost killed at age 5 by a Tatar who escaped the massacre of the Tatar prisoners, those who were taller than a linchpin of a cart. Then in 1203, he was given the Kereit princess Sorqoqtani as a wife. At the time, Tolui was 12 or 13 years old. As the youngest son, he also inherited the bulk of the army as well as the *ordo* of his father during the *quriltai* of 1206.

Although Tolui did not fight in the wars of unification, he became an outstanding warrior. His talent quickly outstripped that of his brothers and earned the admiration of his father. Although Tolui did not participate in the initial invasion of the Jin Empire in 1211, in 1213 he saw combat. Despite having the reputation of being his father's favorite son, Tolui fought in the front lines and scaled the walls when capturing the city of Dexing. Afterward, he led armies under the mentorship of more experienced generals, learning the craft of large unit operations. His first independent command did not occur until the invasion of the Khwarazmian Empire.

After securing Mawarannahr, Chinggis Khan entered modern-day Afghanistan. He dispatched Tolui to the region of Khurasan. Tolui's campaign was so thorough in destroying resistance that chroniclers said that 1,000 years could pass and the region would still not recover. While hyperbole does give an idea of Tolui's wrath, he did effectively destroy any resistance to the Mongols not only for this invasion but for the future conquest as well under Chormaqan.

Tolui also accompanied Chinggis Khan against the Tangut in 1225 and was with him at his death in 1227. While Chinggis Khan named Ogodei his successor, Tolui served as regent until a *quriltai* could be convened. The sources do not indicate that Tolui ever considered himself a contender, despite his superior military abilities. Once Ogodei was enthroned, Tolui then led armies against the Jin Empire in several campaigns, even attacking the Jin behind their lines by detouring through Tibet and the Song Empire.

Tolui, however, did not live long after Ogodei's coronation. In 1232, Ogodei became very ill and on the verge of death. According to several sources, Tolui offered himself to the spirit world in exchange for Ogodei's life. It is also known that Tolui was an alcoholic who may have also drank himself to death.

Tolui's death devastated Ogodei, as the two were very close. The Mongol khan wept in his cups over the death of his younger brother. The two were drinking companions as well. During his lifetime and posthumously Tolui was known as Ulugh Noyon and Yeke Noyon, both connoting "Great Commander" or "Lord."

Tolui had four sons with Sorqoqtani—Mongke, Khubilai, Ariq Boke, and Hulegu—who changed the destiny of the empire. The eldest, Mongke, was born in 1209. Tolui had six other sons with other wives and concubines. From his wife Saruq, he had Jorika. With Linqum Khatun, he had Qutuqtu. Bochok, Moga, Sogatai, and Subugatai were all born from wives who have not been identified. As Mongke, Khubilai, Ariq Boke, and

ACCIDENTAL DEATH?

The sources indicate that Tolui sacrificed his life to the spirit world so that his brother, Ogodei, might live. This altruistic story appears in a number of sources, which all saw their final form during the reign of rulers from Tolui's family. While it might make a great scene in a book or even a movie, it might not be accurate.

We know that *The Secret History of the Mongols* was redacted during the reign of Mongke, probably to justify his coup. Additionally, writers such as Juvaini and Rashid al-Din worked for Toluids (Hulegu and Ghazan) and thus were unlikely to cast Tolui or Sorqoqtani in a dim light.

There is some vague evidence that suggests that Sorqoqtani (if not also Tolui) was bitter that Tolui did not become the Mongol ruler. Knowing that Ogodei was an alcoholic, Sorqoqtani or a servant poisoned his wine. One of two things then happened. In the first, the plot was discovered; Tolui rejected the accusation and drank from the poisoned cup to demonstrate her innocence, only to die. Or, as he was a "drinking buddy" of Ogodei's, he was accidentally poisoned as well. This topic is still a matter of debate among historians, as the evidence for any of the possibilities is not sufficient to determine the actual cause of Tolui's death.

Hulegu were the sons of Tolui's primary and favorite wife, Sorqoqtani, they receive the most attention in the sources and for their deeds. During the reign of Mongke, Tolui was posthumously granted the title of khan.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics: Quriltai; Organization and Administration: Khurasan; Mawarannahr; Ordo; Individuals: Borte; Chinggis Khan; Hulegu; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; Key Events: Quriltai of 1206; Military: Chormaqan Noyan; Key Places: Jin Empire; Khwarazmian Empire*

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Toqtamysh (d. 1406)

Virtually nothing is known about the early life of Toqtamysh, who was later ruler of the Blue Horde and then the Golden Horde. He emerges in history as a contender for the throne of the Blue Horde. His initial efforts were thwarted by the ruler Urus Khan (r. 1368–1378). Toqtamysh took refuge in Central Asia and became a protégé of the warlord Timur-i Leng (Tamerlane). With Timur's support, Toqtamysh successfully defeated and killed Urus Khan. Toqtamysh began his rule in earnest and then sought to reunite the Jochid Ulus.

The state of affairs in the Golden Horde was desultory. Power was held by the king-maker Mamai, a non-Chinggisid, who failed to crush the rebellion of the Rus' principality of Moscow. Toqtamysh used the instability as an opportunity to intervene. He defeated Mamai in battle and claimed all of the Jochid territories, unifying all of the Jochid realm. Toqtamysh then promptly attacked Moscow, sacking the city and restoring Mongol authority.

Toqtamysh continued to restore Jochid prerogatives and sought to reclaim Jochid territory in Transcaucasia, which had been the source of contention between the Golden Horde and the Il-Khanate after the dissolution of the empire. The Jochids only successfully claimed it after the fall of the Il-Khanate in 1335. Even then they only held it briefly, abandoning it after 1357 due to a succession crisis. Toqtamysh conquered Tabriz, the major city in the region, in 1386.

This action ran Toqtamysh afoul with his former patron's own plans, as Timur was also active in Transcaucasia. Despite Timur's assistance to Toqtamysh against Urus Khan, Toqtamysh viewed Timur's claims to kingship as illegitimate, as Timur was not descended from Chinggis Khan. Combined with Timur's own desire for empire building, conflict seemed inevitable. In 1387 Timur launched an attack on the region of Khwarazm, which Toqtamysh had also captured as a former Jochid domain and abutted Timur's own territory in Mawarannahr.

The war between Toqtamysh and Timur occupied much of the remainder of Toqtamysh's reign. It was a war of lulls and then intense destruction. In 1391, Timur launched an attack across the Syr Darya after Toqtamysh raided his territory. Toqtamysh withdrew deep into the steppes, hoping to overextend Timur's army. Well versed in steppe warfare, Timur maintained order and caught up with Toqtamysh along the Kunduzcha River, a tributary of the Volga River near Samara. Timur routed his former protégé again, although Toqtamysh escaped with most of his army.

The defeat had minimal impact on Toqtamysh's position in the Jochid Khanate. During the lull in fighting, he formed an alliance with Lithuania to secure his western frontier. He then invaded Transcaucasia in 1394 as well as Timurid possessions in Iran. Timur pursued him across the Caucasus Mountains. Toqtamysh and Timur fought once again at the Terek River, and Timur once again proved to be Toqtamysh's superior. Although Toqtamysh escaped, Timur pursued and defeated him a second time. Timur then sacked a number of cities in the Golden Horde, including Sarai in 1395. With the destruction of the Golden Horde's commercial centers, merchants gravitated to the

routes that ran through Timur's realm. Unlike his previous defeats by Timur, this time Toqtamysh was unable to recover and became a refugee.

Timur supported one of Urus Khan's sons, Temur-Qutlugh (r. 1397–1400), in controlling the Blue Horde. Timur also ensured that neither Toqtamysh nor Temur Qutlugh could seize control of the entire Jochid Ulus. Timur encouraged the rise of Edigu, a non-Chinggisid. Edigu didn't rule directly but became a kingmaker and puppet master, ensuring that the Jochid Khans for the next two decades were ineffectual without his support.

Toqtamysh, however, found refuge in Lithuania but still sought to restore his rule. Lithuania used this opportunity to expand into Jochid territory and gave Toqtamysh and his followers pastures and villages near modern-day Vilnius and Trakai in Lithuania and Poland, respectively. Their descendants later became known as the Lithuanian Tatars.

With Lithuanian support, Toqtamysh attacked Temur-Qutlugh but met defeat at the Vorskla River, a tributary of the Dnieper, in 1399. Toqtamysh did not return with the defeat of the Lithuanians but fled to northeast to his former Blue Horde domains in Siberia. He reconciled with Timur, who worried about Edigu's growing power. Toqtamysh, however, did not have a last shot at glory. Timur died in 1405, and then Toqtamysh passed away in modern-day Tumen, Siberia, in 1406.

With Toqtamysh's death, the Blue Horde as well as the Golden Horde in general lost any chance at recovery. Edigu sought to maintain his power at the expense of the Chinggisid princes. Toqtamysh's sons challenged him but met defeat and faded into obscurity as the Golden Horde gradually fragmented in the late 15th century.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Tabriz; *Organization and Administration:* Blue Horde; Golden Horde; *Individuals:* Timur-i Leng; *Key Places:* Lithuania

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GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

OVERVIEW ESSAY

As one might expect with an empire that stretched from the Sea of Japan to the Carpathian Mountains, there are too many groups and organizations to list even among specific ethnicities, such as the Han (Chinese) peoples. A separate encyclopedia would be necessary to discuss all of the nomadic tribes within the Mongol Empire or the various ethnicities in adequate detail. What follows is a sampling of key groups of tribes, ethnic groups, religious sects, and commercial identities as well as political and military organizations that provided distinct identities for their members. In many of these groups and organizations, one could be a member of a tribe or religious group and also possess a separate commercial or political identity. Nonetheless, one identity tended to supersede other identities but could vary with each era of the Mongol Empire as well as with geographic location.

Tribes

Although Chinggis Khan forged a single identity for the tribes of Mongolia as the Mongols, regardless of whether one was a Tatar, a Naiman, or a Merkit, the old tribal identities never completely disappeared. The old tribal name carried varying levels of importance. Some names became clan names or even continued as tribal names under the umbrella of the Mongols even as the Mongols attempted to obliterate other names from existence. Memory, however, kept many names alive.

For instance, it is often inaccurately claimed that the Mongols committed genocide against the Tatars. While the Mongols may have exterminated the ruling elite among the Tatars, many Tatars survived. Chinggis Khan even had two Tatar wives. Additionally, the name “Tatar” was often used as a synonym for “Mongol” in the Islamic world, in the Rus’, and eventually in the West. The antecedents for this varied with each region, but nonetheless, even though the Tatars were among Chinggis Khan’s most bitter enemies, the name did not disappear. Furthermore, it remains an ethnonym among the descendants of the Golden Horde.

The Kereit, however, had a different experience. Unlike the Tatars, the Mongols did not bear grudges against the Kereit and largely allowed them to remain intact after

defeating them in 1203. Even though Kereit princesses married Chinggis Khan's sons, the name "Kereit" largely faded in history, although it became a clan name among various Central Asian groups, such as the Kazakhs.

The Merkit and Naiman had similar experiences as the Kereit, although, like the Tatars, the Merkit and Naiman were stalwart opponents of the Mongols. Unlike the Tatars, however, their names faded from history. After their respective defeats, Chinggis Khan distributed them among his regiments so they could never exist as Naiman or Merkit again. As with the Kereit, however, their names lingered and became clan names in parts of Central Asia. There is little reason to think that the originators of these clans were either Merkit or Naiman, but nonetheless the names still held prestige.

The Onggirad had a different experience altogether. They had strong ties with the Mongols prior to the rise of Chinggis Khan. Both Borte and Hoelun originated among the Onggirad. Despite marriage ties, the Onggirad also fought against Chinggis Khan. They submitted to him and became part of the Mongols but continued to have a slightly separate identity as a source of wives for Mongol rulers, including during the Yuan period. While Onggirad males found positions within the Mongol government, the primary importance of the Onggirad appears to have been as a source of brides.

The Oirat had a similar situation. Technically, the Oirat were not part of the Mongolian steppe nomads. Rather, the Mongols classified them among the hodgepodge of groups that dwelled in the taiga of Siberia known as the Hoy-in Irgen (Forest People). The Oirat, however, quickly gained favor and also became one of the tribes that provided wives for the Chinggisid princes. Through this manner, the Oirat's prestige grew. Many Oirat rose to positions of prominence and even challenged for supremacy during the reign of the Northern Yuan. Eventually the Oirat became a larger tribal confederation that vied for dominance in Inner Asia against not only Chinggisid Mongols but also Russia and the Qing Empire.

The Onggud were a Turkic people on the frontier of the steppes and historic China in what is now known as Inner Mongolia. They were also part of the *juyin*, a group that will be discussed later. Although they had largely remained neutral in the struggle for power in northern Mongolia, the Onggud eventually submitted to Chinggis Khan and gained considerable favor. While initially viewed as not part of the Mongols, over time the Onggud became assimilated and were simply another part of the early modern tribal structure.

Another tribe, the Alans, had a similar experience. The Alans became a Mongolian tribe known as the Asut even though the Alans were originally an ancient Iranian tribe that had been part of the Sarmatian confederations of the classical era. Furthermore, when the Mongols defeated the Alans, they dwelled in the steppes between the Black and Caspian Seas and the foothills of the Caucasus Mountains. Their descendants, known as Ossetes, still dwell there today, but several thousand were sent to the Yuan Empire and served in the bodyguard of the Mongol khan. After the fall of the Yuan Empire, they joined the Yuan in Mongolia and eventually became a distinct Mongol tribe.

The Kipchaks are the final tribal group to be discussed. In many ways, they were the second most important tribe within the Mongol Empire due to their sheer numbers. As

the Mongols expanded across the Eurasian steppes, the Turkic Kipchaks came under their sway. Several Kipchak confederations existed, but none had a strong leadership structure, preventing them from creating their own empire. With their defeat, the Kipchaks became a reservoir of manpower for the Mongol Empire and even the majority within the Golden Horde. Furthermore, they served throughout the empire and the four successor khanates. Not all of the Kipchaks served the Mongols, however. Those who could fled from the Mongols. Others were sold into slavery and became a key element for another group, the Mamluks, who are discussed below.

Ethnic Groups

In addition to tribal groups, the Mongol Empire acquired a number of ethnicities. With the conquest of the Middle East, Persians, Arabs, Kurds, and, even more so, Turks entered the empire along with Armenians, Georgians, and others. The same process occurred in the east. While Hans (Chinese) comprised the bulk of the eastern population, among the most important other groups were the Jurchen, Khitan, and Tangut. All three ruled empires but were also minorities in their own states. The Jurchen and Khitan both originated in Manchuria. The Khitan, who had linguistic and perhaps cultural ties to the Mongols, established the Liao Empire (965–1125), which was then conquered by the Jurchen, who ruled the Jin Empire (1125–1234). The Tangut, however, appear to have been a Tibeto-Burmese people, coming from the vicinity of eastern Tibet and Sichuan Province in the modern-day Peoples Republic of China. Their state was a contemporary and sometimes subservient kingdom to both the Liao and Jurchen. All three groups largely disappeared from history. Both the Tangut and Khitan assimilated into the Mongols or the Han population. The Jurchen who remained in Manchuria, however, made another appearance in history by establishing the Qing Empire (1633–1911).

The Uyghurs, who submitted in 1209, also played a key role in the Mongol Empire. Like the Khitan, many Uyghurs found employment in the bureaucracy and military of the Mongols. Unlike the Jurchen and Tangut, the Uyghurs never resisted the Mongols but voluntarily submitted to them. The Mongols even adopted a modified Uyghur script for their writing system.

Although the Mongols never conquered Italy, Italians, particularly merchants, were a key ethnic group in the Mongol Empire. As they were not subjects of the empire, their direct influence is perhaps overstated at times. Nonetheless, Italian merchants from Venice and Genoa as well as other cities in Italy ventured into the Mongol Empire to trade and carried back not only slaves and goods such as spices and luxurious clothes but also ideas that would later influence Renaissance painting.

Religious Groups

Buddhists, Daoists, Confucians, Christians, Muslims, Jews, and pagans of all varieties existed in the Mongol Empire. The multifarious nature of religions in the Mongol Empire was easily apparent, and somewhat bewildering, to anyone who traveled through

the empire. Subtle differences between sects were often missed by commentators unfamiliar with the religions, but several religious groups also merit commentary.

Nestorian Christians, or rather members of the Church of the East, practiced the most prevalent form of Christianity within the Mongol Empire. Uyghurs, Onggud, Naiman, Kereit, and Alans all had practitioners among them, as did the Mongol elite. Nestorianism's popularity dwindled, however, as Islam and Buddhism increased in popularity in the 14th century. The Church of the East was not alone. Franciscan missionaries from Western Europe attempted to convert the Mongols to Catholicism. Their efforts were for naught, as they largely only succeeded in converting Nestorians.

Jews have often been in an awkward position in history and rarely in one of power. The situation was no different during the Mongol era. Unlike most religions, Jewish houses of worship did not receive the same protections as other religions, largely because there were no political elites to sponsor their cause. This is not to say that the Jews were persecuted by the Mongols, but Jews did occupy an odd space in the Mongol Empire, one that has gained little attention in the scholarship.

Buddhism consists of several sects and groupings, each with different interpretations of the religion. Two sects in particular loomed large in the history of the Mongol Empire. The first is Tibetan Sakya Buddhism. It became the favored sect of Khubilai Khan and was instrumental in securing Mongol control over Tibet. The other was White Lotus Buddhism, a millenarian sect that influenced the Red Turban movement, which led to the collapse of Mongol control in China.

Other Groups

Those groups that fall into this category consist of various ethnicities, tribes, and religions, but they took their primary identity (at least in the eyes of the Mongols) from their political, military, or commercial group.

The Assassins were actually Nizari Ismaili Shia Muslims, so in a sense they were a subset of a sect of a branch of Islam. The Mongols largely destroyed them within the Mongol Empire, although the sect (albeit without the unsavory reputation) still exists. Their destruction had little to do with religious differences and everything to do with being a threat to Mongol rule. Even though only a small fraction of the Nizari Ismailis could truly be considered Assassins, the notorious label was applied to all of them in the medieval period.

The Mamluks were slaves who were trained as soldiers and were manumitted after converting to Islam. Mamluks existed before the 13th century, but when they seized control of Egypt in 1250, the Mamluks became more than just "slave soldiers." Although Mamluks could be of any ethnicity, in the 13th century most were Kipchaks due to their availability through the Mongol conquests. Gradually they were replaced by Circassians, as the Golden Horde began to limit the exportation of Kipchaks.

Another military group was the *juyin*. They were not a single group but a category of frontier groups who guarded the borders of the Jin Empire. They consisted of both nomadic tribes, such as the Onggud and Tatars, but could include Khitan as well. While not necessarily united, they did recognize a form of solidarity with other *juyin* members

through their shared mission. The Jin Empire also viewed them as largely the same and interchangeable even as they recognized that the *juyin* consisted of different groups.

Commercial groups also existed. These were the *ortoqs*, merchants who developed a special relationship with the Chinggisid princes. In return for Chinggisid investment in and underwriting of their caravans, the *ortoqs* gave the Chinggisids a percentage of the profits from their trade. Most but not all of the *ortoqs* appeared to have been Central Asian Muslim merchants. Buddhists and even Nestorian Christian merchants, among others, also found a niche in the *ortoq* system.

The Semuren were part of a political category devised by Khubilai Khan as he sought to reorganize his empire. He created a hierarchy that maintained the Mongols at the top but structured the system so that trustworthy and preferred groups had advantages over others, such as the recently conquered Hans from the Song Empire. The Semuren consisted of the “round-eye peoples”—westerners or those west of China, such as Uyghurs, Arabs, Persians, Italians, Rus’, etc. Religious identity played no role in the category.

Alans

Also known as the Asud (the Mongolian plural for As), the Alans were a nomadic Indo-European group who occupied the Caucasus region and found service in a variety of forms throughout the Mongol Empire. The Alans occupied the steppes between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea during the ancient period, entering the region as part of the Sarmatian confederation in the second and third centuries BCE. When the Sarmatians collapsed, the Alans continued and became the primary entity in the region until the arrival of the Huns in 371 CE. With Hunnic expansion, the majority of Alans moved into the Caucasus Mountains. Others remained in the steppes, often becoming members (sometimes involuntarily) of other confederations such as the Huns, Avars, and Khazars. Having existed in the region for centuries, the Alans subsisted in a variety of economic modes.

By the 13th century, many continued to live as pastoral nomads, but evidence also demonstrates that many became sedentary and dwelled in walled towns in the Caucasus Mountains, including building a strongly fortified capital known as Magas. Viewed by their neighbors as quarrelsome and warlike, the Alans were not unified and often warred among themselves.

The Mongols first encountered the Alans during Subedei and Jebe’s reconnaissance en force in 1223. As the Mongols crossed the Caucasus Mountains, they encountered an allied army of Kipchak Turks and Alans. This alliance demonstrated that the Alans could and did maintain friendly relations with other groups in the Black Sea and Caspian Sea region. United, the Alans and Kipchaks formed a powerful coalition against the limited Mongol force. Eschewing direct warfare, the Mongols engaged in diplomacy with the Kipchaks, calling on their more similar customs and language. In doing so, the Mongols successfully fractured the alliance and defeated the Alans in combat, with the Kipchaks withdrawing. The Mongols then attacked the Kipchaks.

After the Battle of the Kalka River, the Mongols then disappeared from the region for over a decade, although by 1229 Mongol border forces skirmished frequently with Alans still dwelling in the steppes on the northern edge of the Caspian Sea. This group of Alans remained defiant until 1236–1237, when the vast army commanded by Batu and Subedei arrived. Overwhelmed, the Volga River Alans submitted. Although the majority of the Mongols' attention was given to the Kipchaks and Rus' during the Western Campaign, they also made efforts to subdue the Caucasian Alans. An army led by Guyuk and Mongke was dispatched against them in 1239. While the Mongols defeated the Alans in open combat, the Mongols found that subduing their mountain fortresses was more difficult. The thick forests hampered their movements and permitted guerrilla attacks. Eventually, however, the Mongols were able to cut roads through the forests to haul their siege engines and reduced the Alans' strongholds. Magas withstood a siege for three months before it was stormed and all of its 2,700 defenders killed. Despite the destruction of Magas, other strongholds remained out of Mongol control and never fully came under Mongol dominion. Indeed, the Mongols had to post strong patrols in the region to ward off Alan raids. In 1277 another effort was made by Mongke-Temur (1267–1280) to conquer the Alans. He successfully reduced another fortress, but again conquest remained elusive.

Afterward, the Alans continued to play a role in the Mongol Empire. Due to their proximity to the Il-Khanate and location within the Golden Horde, they undoubtedly contributed significantly and perhaps suffered during the internecine wars between the two. Possibly because of their recalcitrance, many Alans were also deported across the Mongol Empire. Many were brought back to Mongolia during Guyuk and Mongke's campaign against them. In Mongolian, they became known as the Asud.

While the Asud came to Mongolia as slaves and soldiers, during the reign of Khubilai Khan they became a valued asset. In 1277, Khubilai formed a part of the *keshik* with 3,000 Asud. Their numbers in the guard continued to grow, and by 1309 approximately 30,000 served in the *keshik*. Furthermore, during the Yuan dynasty the Alans in the east converted to Catholicism. As their numbers grew, so did their influence in the later years of the Yuan Empire, and at times they were the true power behind the khan. Yet the disproportionate numbers of Alans in the guard was also due to their loyalty. They were crucial during Nayan's Rebellion in 1287, yet they also could act as a praetorian guard as they did in the 1323 coup, which brought Yisun-Temur to the throne. Nonetheless, most evidence demonstrates that their loyalty to the khan was the norm, although their leaders were jealous of their influence over the khan and protected their prerogatives within the court.

After the Mongols were driven out of China, the Alans remained loyal and escorted the Yuan emperor Toghlan Temur to Mongolia. Over time they increasingly Mongolized in both custom and appearance through marriage and the inability to maintain contact with the Alans in the west. During the Northern Yuan period, the Alans became essentially another Mongol tribe known as the Asud. Meanwhile, those Alans in the west who fought so fiercely to remain independent in the Caucasus Mountains continue to do so. Gradually the name As transformed into Os and eventually to Ossetes, perhaps derived from the Mongol terminology in the Golden Horde. Today the Ossetians,

who live on the border of Russia and Georgia, still consider themselves to be the descendants of the Alans and have fought to be independent of Georgia.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Toghon Temur; *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Batu; Mongke Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; *Military:* Kalka River, Battle of the; Subedei

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The Assassins (1090–1256 CE)

A secretive Shia Islamic group notorious for murder, the Assassins gained fame throughout Europe and the Middle East during the era of the crusades and the Mongol conquests. The English term "assassin" derives from the Arabic term *hashinin*, or one who uses hashish. The term was first applied to this group by Europeans who came to equate its meaning with murder. In actuality, the Assassins were Nizari Ismaili religious dissenters. The Nizari Ismailis represented a separate sect of Shia Islam by the ninth century CE. The Ismailis' first political base was in the Fatimid caliphate centered in Egypt. By the 1090s, the Ismailis were split into two groups. One of these groups, the Nizaris, evolved into the sect popularly known as the Assassins, who founded their own state in Persia with a satellite state in Syria. They attempted to achieve their ultimate goal of conquest over other Islamic polities by assassinating their greatest political opponents.

For Europeans, the group's negative associations with hashish stemmed from both the dangerousness of their missions and the myths associated with Nizari Ismaili indoctrination processes. Many crusaders believed that the Assassins were under the influence of hashish while performing the murders that oftentimes resulted in their own deaths. More fanciful myths attest to the use of brainwashing tactics utilized by the master of the Assassins Order, the Old Man of the Mountain. Marco Polo related that while on his travels in Persia he was informed of legends that explained that the Old Man of the Mountain's fortress resembled paradise so well that young recruits were drugged and entranced by its beauty. In the end, legends recorded that recruits were



Castle Masyaf in Syria, seat of the Order of the Assassins, early 12th century. Although the Assassins were destroyed in Iran by the Mongols, they survived in Syria. The Mamluk sultan Baybars employed them against their foes in the Il-Khanate. (Valery Shanin/Dreamstime.com)

convinced to do anything their master requested, even if it meant death, since they were eager to die and return to paradise. However, such accounts are quite dubious, since both leaders of the Assassins—Hasan Sabbah (d. 1124), who was centered at Alamut, and Sinan (d. 1192) who was quartered at Masyaf in Syria—were referred to in differing accounts as being the legendary Old Man of the Mountain who was responsible for indoctrinating recruits through drugging and visions of paradise. Furthermore, Marco Polo, who records these legends, traveled across Persia in 1264, long after the deaths of these two Nizari Ismaili leaders. Sunni Muslim polemicists also provided numerous negative accounts of the Nizari Ismailis, oftentimes accusing them of heresy and attempting to destroy Islam from within. In any case, surrounded by numerous hostile factions, many Nizari Ismailis were forced to conceal their true religious identity through the practice of *taqiyya*, the Shia religious doctrine that permits concealment of one's true identity and beliefs for survival purposes. Nizari Ismailis also kept their writings and practices quite secret, which only fueled the fire for both European legends and Sunni Muslims who were hostile to them.

Hasan Sabbah was originally a Twelver Shia and a Seljuk government official. Muslim folklore relates that the Seljuk Persian vizier Nizam al-Mulk (d. 1092) betrayed him at court, with the result that Hasan Sabbah left Persia and traveled to Fatimid Egypt, where he studied Ismaili Islam. On returning to Persia he founded the Nizari Ismaili sect, and in 1090 he seized control of the fortress at Alamut, a Shia stronghold that served as the sect's headquarters. Some accounts attribute the assassination of Nizam

al-Mulk in 1092 to the Assassins; however, conflicting accounts attribute his death to other political factions. Saladin (d. 1193) reportedly also survived two assassination attempts during his siege of Masyaf in Syria. In any case, while attempting to set up their own state, the Nizari Ismailis found themselves in conflict with the existing Seljuk state as well as with a variety of Muslim rulers and eventually the Mongols.

During the early period of the Mongol conquests, the Nizari Ismailis viewed the emergence of the Mongols as a valuable counterweight against the power of the Khwarazmian Empire. They even sent emissaries to Mongke Khan's capital at Karakorum in the 1250s. However, they were turned away by the Mongols, who did not trust the motives of a group that was notorious for assassination attempts. In any event, after the Mongol conquest of the Khwarazmian Empire, with Hulegu's attentions turned westward, the Assassins became a prime target. In 1252, Hulegu was clearly instructed to destroy the Assassins and all who belonged to their sect.

The Nizari Ismaili state, which mainly consisted of scattered mountain fortresses, eventually collapsed in 1256 when the Mongols decisively routed the Nizari Ismaili Assassins. Even though the Nizari Ismailis did briefly recapture Alamut in 1257, this gain was only temporary, since Mongol forces quickly took the fortress back. After the Mongol conquest of Nizari Ismaili territory, the sect became depoliticized, receding back into other Shia communities in Persia or dispersing to other areas in Afghanistan and Central Asia. However, in Syria, the Nizari Ismailis survived longer by making alliances with various crusaders and Muslim rulers, shifting allegiances as necessary. Yet after the fall of Alamut, the Syrian faction became increasingly discouraged until they were finally defeated by the Mamluk sultan Baybars in 1273.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Individuals:* Baybars I; Hulegu; Mongke Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; *Key Places:* Abbasid Caliphate; Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 21; Document 40

DEEP COVER

Notorious for engaging in long-term assassination missions, medieval accounts from both Arabic and European sources indicated that these assassins insinuated themselves into groups, which allowed them easy access to their targets. Devotees oftentimes lived and worked under the cloak of secret identities until the time was right for achieving their goals and committing assassinations. However, once assassinations were attempted or actually carried out, the perpetrators were usually killed on the spot, making their assignments essentially equivalent to suicide missions. Assassins were regularly caught and killed due to the fact that most assassinations of prominent figures occurred in public places, oftentimes mosques. Such acts of devotion and self-sacrifice further served to alarm, terrorize, and intimidate enemy political and religious opponents. It also made it very unlikely that the Assassins were drug addicts.

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Forest People

Hoi-yin Irgen literally means “People (Irgen) of the Forest (Hoi or Oi).” These were largely Turkic and Mongolian tribes who lived in the taiga of Siberia. The term specifically applied to the tribes who dwelled between the Yenisei River and the Amur River, with Lake Baikal serving as the center. Hoi-yin Irgen was also applied to the numerous other Siberian people beyond this core region. The region was and still remains largely a boreal forest, but there are open spaces that allowed for a semipastoral nomadic lifestyle. Although the region was separated from Mongolia by mountains, these were not insurmountable, and some of the Forest People became involved in the politics and affairs of the Mongolian steppes.

The Forest People consisted of several tribes. The most notable were the Oirat, who later played a major role in not only the history of the Mongol Empire but also Mongolia and Inner Asian in general. In the Yenisei River Basin dwelled the Kyrgyz people. This Turkic group was largely pastoral nomadic but also had some grain-based agriculture. In the ninth century they also played the determining role in the destruction of the Uyghur Khanate (744–840) by destroying its capital, Ordo Baligh. Other tribes included the Buriyat, Barqun, Keshtimi, Qangqas, Qabqanas, Qori Tumed, Telengut, To'olos, Tubas, and Urasut and many other smaller tribes. Although most these have faded into history, the Buriyat Mongols still exist in the Russian Republic of Buryatia. The Tubas are associated with the Tuvans of the Republic of Tuva, part of Russia. In truth, the modern-day Tuvan population consists of a number of the former Forest People.

The Mongols conquered the Forest People in 1207. A commander named Qorchi led one force, while Jochi led another against the Kyrgyz and Oirat. The Oirat, led by Quduqa Beki, submitted without resistance and as a result gained considerable favor from Chinggis Khan, as it was through his diplomacy that the Buriyat, Barqun, Urasud, Qabqanas, and Tubas submitted. So favored was Quduqa Beki that Chinggis Khan married his daughter, Checheyigen, to Quduqa's son, Inalchi. Jochi's daughter, Qoluiqan, then married Inalchi's elder brother, Torolchi. The Forest People from the

Yenisei River and westward became part of Jochi's domain, while Qorchi governed the territories around Lake Baikal.

While gaining the submission of the Forest People proved easy enough, ruling them was more difficult. The forests of Siberia made communications difficult. Additionally, the Mongols did not station a large force in the region. While Qorchi commanded a *tumen* (unit of 10,000), at least half of it was derived from troops from the Forest People. However, he mismanaged his position, which caused a rebellion led by Botoqui Tarqun, the wife of the recently deceased Qori Tumed leader, Daiduqul Soqor. She apparently, more so than her husband, disagreed with Qorchi's policies of acquiring wives from his subjects.

Initially, the rebellion was limited to the Qori Tumed, who captured Qorchi. When Chinggis Khan learned of the rebellion, he sent his trusted aide Boroghul Noyan to deal with it while also dispatching Quduqa Beki to resolve the matter diplomatically. The latter indicates that Chinggis Khan realized that the Qori Tumed may have been justified in their grievances. Diplomacy failed, and they took Quduqa prisoner. Meanwhile, as Boroghul scouted ahead of his army with two others, he was ambushed and killed by the Qori Tumed. This so angered Chinggis Khan that he had to be restrained from personally leading an army of retribution.

Instead, a general named Dorbei Doqshin led an army. Rather than going the normal route into Qori Tumed territory, he carved a new path. His men followed animal trails and transformed them into a road that allowed his army to come over a mountain and behind the Qori Tumed. Dorbei Doqshin thoroughly defeated the Qori Tumed. Botoqui was given to Quduqa Beki as a wife as a reward for his efforts. One hundred Qori Tumed were given to the family of Boroghul, and Qorchi still gained 30 wives.

QORCHI'S PROPHECY AND PROBLEM

After Temujin separated from Jamuqa, one of the individuals who joined him was Qorchi. Qorchi said he joined him because he prophesied that Temujin, not Jamuqa, would become the leader of the Mongols. Qorchi also demanded a reward if his prophesy should come true. Temujin agreed to make him the commander of 10,000. This was a very generous prize, but Qorchi viewed this as insignificant if he prophesied Temujin's rise to greatness. Qorchi then demanded to be able to have 30 wives (which he could do normally if he had the resources) but also that he be able to pick them from the beautiful women. This was something that was typically only permitted for the most powerful of rulers. Temujin permitted it.

It was not until 1206 that Temujin became powerful enough to grant Qorchi his request. Qorchi became the commander of 10,000, largely consisting of the Forest Tribes. He then forced the Forest People to submit and directly ruled over the To'olos and Telengut and served as the governor of the rest. He also selected his 30 women from among them. Unfortunately, his methods of selecting women left much to be desired. He gave little regard to the woman's wishes or her marriage status. Not surprisingly, this led to the rebellion of 1218 by the Qori Tumed when Qorchi attempted to collect their women for his harem.

Dorbei's mission ended the rebellion before it could become a larger event. Afterward the region was largely passive and often overlooked in the sources. The Forest People, however, remained integral for the Mongols, as the Forest People provided luxury goods in the form of tribute: furs, especially sable, and gyrfalcons, which were highly prized for hunting. Additionally, the Yenisei River Basin became a key resource for providing grain for Karakorum as well as gold. It was a region that both Ariq Boke and Qaidu attempted to control in their wars with Khubilai, demonstrating its continued importance in the later period of the Mongol Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Oirat; Uyghurs

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Franciscans

The Franciscan Order, also known as the Friars Minor, came into being through the efforts of Francis of Assisi (1182–1226). Despite a rowdy and affluent youth, Francis gradually withdrew from the upper strata of society and became more concerned about the poor. His piety and simplicity of life attracted others and eventually gained papal recognition. In 1209, Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216) permitted him the Franciscan Order. The Franciscans were known for their piety and were easily recognizable for their coarse brown robes, tonsured hair, and ascetic lifestyle. At the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), Pope Innocent III viewed the Franciscans as a key tool in fighting heresy within Christendom but also for spreading Christianity. It was at this council that non-Christian people were identified. While the Mongols had not reached Europe yet, most of those identified would end up in the Mongol Empire.

The invasion of Europe caught the kingdoms of Europe off guard, and the Mongols' withdrawal from Hungary was just as surprising. Although crusades were called to defend Christendom against the Mongols, the Papacy sought to learn more about the Mongols. Pope Innocent IV (r. 1243–1254) saw the need to gain intelligence about the Mongols. To that end, he sent two Franciscan friars, Benedict the Pole and John of Plano Carpini, to gather intelligence and convert the Mongols if possible. While their proselytization failed, both left accounts of their journey, providing much information about the Mongols.

Another Franciscan was sent during the reign of Mongke Khan but not by the Papacy. Rather, King Louis IX of France sought an alliance with the Mongols. He had some contacts with them during his crusading endeavors in the Middle East. While the

Mongols continued their “submit or die” rhetoric, Louis still believed that an alliance against the Muslims was possible. To gauge interest, he sent the Franciscan William of Rubruck. As William was not a formal envoy, his mission took on a much more religious tone. His first priority was as a missionary. In the end, Mongke did not permit him to proselytize and sent him back to Europe. Although his missionary activity failed, William returned to Europe with a wealth of information, although it did not improve King Louis IX’s situation.

The Franciscans continued their missionary activity even as the Mongol Empire split apart. John of Monte Corvino carried letters on behalf of Pope Nicholas IV to the il-khan Arghun, Qaidu, and Khubilai Khan. John began his activity with the Mongols in 1289, traveling to Tabriz. He then traveled to Qaidu, but the war between Qaidu and Khubilai prevented him from continuing to Khubilai Khan. Undeterred, John of Monte Corvino then turned south and took the sea route via India. By the time he reached China, Khubilai was dead, but Temur Khan (r. 1294–1307), Khubilai’s successor, gave him a warm reception. For the next 12 years, John of Monte Corvino was the sole Catholic presence in the east excluding a few Italian merchants. Unlike his predecessors, John of Plano Carpini and William of Rubruck, John of Monte Corvino found success. Although John of Monte Corvino did not lead the Mongol khan to embrace Catholicism, he did convert Prince Korguz of the Onggud. The latter was a Nestorian Christian, which made the conversion easier. Furthermore, John of Monte Corvino found the Nestorian Alans who served in the *keshik* willing converts as well. Indeed, all of his converts were Nestorians. Furthermore, other Franciscans followed as well. From the account of the Franciscan Odoric of Pordenone we know that most traveled via sea from India to China and that the Franciscans had established themselves in a few cities.

The conversion of the Alan *keshigten* was pivotal. It was they who wrote to Rome and asked for a bishop and more spiritual guidance after John of Monte Corvino’s death in 1338 left them bereft of any religious counsel. In response, another Franciscan was dispatched, John of Marignolli, who arrived in Daidu in 1342 as a papal envoy. Although he did not remain in the Yuan Empire, others did. Their success ended, however, with the collapse of the Yuan Empire and the xenophobia of the Ming dynasty that expelled Christians.

Franciscans in other parts of the empire did not fare well either. In the Chagatai Khanate, Franciscans were killed at Almaligh in 1340, including Richard of Burgundy, who had been assigned as the bishop of Kuldja. Catholicism in Central Asia and in China recovered until the modern era.

The Franciscan missions produced a wealth of information about the Mongol Empire and from various periods. As the Franciscans traveled through much of the empire, their reports often provided a picture of the larger scheme of things even though most of the information concerned their particular area of proselytization. At the same time, the failure of Catholicism to continue in the territories of the Mongol Empire is not surprising. Despite their success in converting sizable populations and even important figures, they failed to create local missionaries or priests who could continue the religion. As illustrated with the Alans, they were reliant on European Franciscans to

continue the religion. Without a flow of Franciscans from Rome or a native clergy, the religion could not continue.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Tabriz; *Organization and Administration:* Keshik; Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Guyuk; Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Alans; Italians; Nestorian Christians; Onggud; *Key Events:* Crusades against the Mongols; Europe, Invasion of; John of Plano Carpini, Journey of; William of Rubruck, Journey of

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Italians

Italy did not exist as an entity in the 13th century, but a number of city-states played a vital role in commerce throughout the Middle Ages. The two primary players and rivals for commercial domination in both the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea were the cities of Genoa and Venice. It is from the latter that Marco Polo, the European most commonly associated with the Mongol Empire, hailed.

Both cities gained trading rights throughout the Levant coast during the crusades. Venice, most notably, gained considerable possessions during the process of the Fourth Crusade, in which it played a key role in sacking Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire. Despite Venice controlling the entrance to the Black Sea, Genoa still had important trading concessions in cities in the Crimean Peninsula, many of which were Genoese colonies including the key city of Kaffa (Caffa). Genoa would continue to dominate the Black Sea trade in the 14th century as well. Genoa may have even actively prevented the Golden Horde from developing its own fleet so that Genoa's dominance went unchallenged. Genoa also used the crusades to its own advantage and aggressively established its own trading network in the Levant, allowing it access into the Il-Khanate as well. Genoese merchants were very active in Tabriz, accessing it through routes from Cilician Armenia.

Although the Byzantine Empire was restored (in a much smaller form and with Genoese help) in 1260 and the Venetians were ejected from Constantinople, they remained active. Venice also established its own network of trading colonies that gave it access to the Mongol Empire. Most notably, Venice controlled the city of Tana, on the

Sea of Azov. From these cities, both Venetian and Genoese merchants found their way to Sarai, the capital of the Golden Horde. While the Genoese maintained a presence in Tabriz, after the collapse of the crusader states in the Levant, the Venetians had limited access to the Il-Khanate.

The wars between the Il-Khanate and the Mamluk Sultanate actually benefited the Italians in the Black Sea. Although less of the Silk Road trade reached the Levant through overland routes, it became diverted to the northern routes and reached the Black Sea. And although the Golden Horde and the Il-Khanate fought frequently, the wars did not affect those routes (whether through the Il-Khanate or the Golden Horde), as the principal fighting took place on both sides of the Caucasus Mountains. Whether it originated from Sarai to Tana or Kaffa or Tabriz to Trebizond, the routes remained secure.

Genoa and Venice were both active in the trading of furs and amber coming from the forests of the Rus' principalities and Siberia. Slaves were also a prime commodity. Venice and Genoa actively participated in the slave trade, particularly in selling Kipchak slaves to the markets in Syria and Egypt. These were the source of the Mamluks who established the Mamluk Sultanate. It was the alliance of the Mamluks, Genoa, and the Golden Horde that forced the Byzantines to allow the slave trade to continue flowing through the Dardenelles. It was not only a necessity for the Mamluk Sultanate but was also lucrative for the Genoese and the Golden Horde. Kipchak and "Tatar" slaves also found their way to Italy through the same avenue.

The best demonstration of the extensive nature of the Italian trading networks is revealed through the family of Marco Polo (1254–1324). The Polo family became linked with the Mongols when Niccolo Polo (Marco's father) and Maffeo (Marco's uncle) left Venice in 1253 to trade in the East. They initially did business in Constantinople before traveling to Soldaia (modern-day Sudak) on the Crimean Peninsula. Due to unsafe travel conditions that barred a return to Venice, the brothers ventured farther east. They traveled through much of the Mongol Empire and eventually reached the court of Khubilai Khan. The Mongol khan provided them with *paizas*, which permitted them to travel safely back to Venice. They then made a return journey in 1271 with Marco Polo, now a young man.

Marco Polo's travels are well documented and discussed in numerous books (including his own) and movies and even a television series with varying degrees of accuracy. What is notable, however, is that a number of other lesser-known and now forgotten merchants also traveled throughout the Mongol Empire, taking advantage of the Pax Mongolica.

The Mongols' relations with Genoa and Venice were not always friendly. At times they, particularly the Golden Horde, engaged in what might be termed aggressive negotiations concerning the amount of taxes and tribute the Mongols received from the trading cities. At other times, the Mongols sought to cut down the arrogance of the Italians, who at times overvalued their own importance to the Mongols. Kaffa, Tana, and Soldaia were assaulted several times. Kaffa, of course, is most well known for being the source of the Black Plague's exit from the steppes and into Europe.

The breakdown of law and order across Eurasia with the disintegration of the Mongol Empire directly impacted the Italian city-states. With Timur-i Leng's invasions of



This 15th-century painting shows Marco Polo sailing from Venice in 1271 with his father and uncle, en route to the court of Khubilai Khan. Marco Polo stayed for 17 years before returning to Italy in 1295. The Polos were but a handful of Italians who operated in the Mongol Empire. (Heritage Images/Corbis)

the Golden Horde, he sought to cripple them economically. While he didn't destroy the Black Sea trade, his destruction of Sarai and other Golden Horde cities slowly impacted the Black Sea by changing the east-west routes and shifted more of the trade southward into Iran.

While the money from the trade helped fuel the Renaissance, the trade routes dwindled, but Genoa and Venice maintained their stranglehold on them. Other states, such as Spain and Portugal, sought new routes to the East so they would not be dependent on either Genoa or Venice. This ultimately is what propelled Christopher Columbus's voyages.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Paiza; Sarai; Tabriz; *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; Yuan Society; *Individuals:* Chabi Khatun; Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Franciscans; Mamluks; *Key Events:* Black Death; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate; Trebizond; *Primary Documents:* Document 25; Document 27; Document 29; Document 35; Document 36; Document 37; Document 38; Document 39; Document 40

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Jews

The Mongol invasion of Eastern Europe in 1241 spread fear far and wide, as it was preceded by many letters demanding submission of the European leaders. As with many events, rumor colored by fear outpaced facts. In a strange twist of events, many mistook the Mongol invasion for the 10 lost tribes of Israel, who sought vengeance against those who persecuted the Jews of Europe.

The Mongols certainly did not claim this identity. Indeed, the Mongols seemed to nearly ignore the Jews as a group. That notion is logical, since the Jews had no kingdom to be conquered or army to pose a threat. Thus, the Jewish communities in the great Yuan cities of Kaifeng, Hangzhou, and Beijing are described by travelers but are seldom referred to in the records of the Mongol administration. When they are mentioned, it is alongside the similar and larger Muslim communities. Such is the order of Khubilai Khan (r. 1264–1294), dated 1280, that prohibited the Muslim and Jewish custom of slaughtering sheep (halal or kosher). Other decrees, dealing with taxes and laws of matrimony, referred to Jews alongside Muslims and Christians. Yet the general Mongol attitude was one of tolerating, or ignoring, religious diversities. To paraphrase Marco Polo, as long as laws were obeyed and the tribute was paid, you could do whatever you wanted with your soul.

TOMB TALES: THE MONGOLS AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ARMENIA

Tombstones and cemeteries, although commemorating the dead, can be an archaeological sign of life. Such is the case of the cemetery excavated in the year 2000 in the village of Eghegis, southeast of the Armenian capital of Yerevan. Forty tombstones carrying Jewish symbols and written Hebrew inscriptions mark the first trace of a Jewish community in Armenia. The dates on the stones give out the Mongol connection—the earliest is parallel to the year 1266 and the latest to 1346/1347. With Mongol support, Armenia prospered; in 1273, the ruling princes of the House of Orbelian made the small village of Eghegis their capital. The area was developed—the citadel Sambatberd was fortified, and trade routes were diverted to include the ever-growing town. With it, according to the traces in the stones, flourished a Jewish community with strong connections to nearby Iran and the Iranian Jews. Its decline in the second half of the 14th century is parallel to the decline of the Armenian authority—and to the end of the Mongol rule in the Il-Khanate.

Furthermore, minority groups were often considered more reliable by the Mongol conquerors and were therefore used as a means of ruling the major population. At times, these groups escaped the harsh fate of the cities conquered by force. In Baghdad, conquered in 1258, both the Christian and Jewish communities escaped the massacre. Yet in many other places, the Jewish communities shared the fate of the entire city—to prosper under Mongol rule or fall under the Mongol sword. Many cities did prosper, and the Mongol religious attitude opened the gates of official posts for many different people. Among these, Jews skilled in languages and arts played important roles in the service of the khans—astronomers, administrators, physicians, and more. Jews impacted the Mongol Empire as individuals, not as a group.

Evidence for this is found in the Il-Khanate. Hulegu was fascinated by astronomy; his entourage included Jewish astronomers, while his grandson, Arghun (r. 1284–1291), appointed the Jewish physician and administrator Saʿd al-Dawla as head of the Il-Khanid administration. Their story, however, had a sad end. When the khan fell ill, Saʿd al-Dawla was executed after Arghun's death for failing to cure him. The next major Jewish official was the famous historian, administrator, and physician Rashid al-Din (d. 1318), who rose to power only after his conversion to Islam.

These persons did not use their position to influence Jewish affairs. Their religion remained a personal issue, and their contact with the Mongol rulers was as individuals, not as representatives of a communal cause.

The Jewish sources are quite different from other 13th-century sources. They did not discuss the Mongol attacks and devastation in detail. Thus, while Christian and Muslim writers described the Mongol conquest as doomsday, Jewish writers took the Mongol enemy as one threat in a long line of threats. In another letter found in the Cairo Genizah, a Jewish traveler described an encounter with a Mongol force in northern Iraq in which he nearly lost his life. Yet while describing his fear and the many dead, he also remarked that it was the third time he got in the way of a Mongol attack, and he complained of the long days he had to hide in the mountains until it was safe enough to come down. A similar neutral attitude is expressed by the famous commentator Nahmanides (d. 1270). He visited Jerusalem a few years after its short conquest by the Mongols in 1260. "Jerusalem is devastated," he wrote; "since the Mongols came, the Jewish community fled, and some of them were killed." The Mongols received no more attention than that. The indifference of the Mongols toward the Jews as a group was echoed by indifference of the Jews toward the Mongols as a threat.

But in the level of ideas, the Jewish attitude was different. The hope for a Jewish national resurrection that began in unrealistic tones with the invasion of Europe evolved into practical hopes. In the works written in the early 14th century, the il-khan was a potential ally.

The devastating Mongol invasions into the Land of Israel, wrote Rabbi Nissim of Marseilles, were a part of a divine plan to prevent any other people from settling in the land—preserving it for a future Jewish homecoming. Rabbi Yossef ben Kaspi went further, surmising that it is possible to contact the Mongol il-khan and with his help assemble all the Jews back to the land.

EATING KOSHER

Jews and Muslims have similar methods of slaughtering animals for food, both stemming from Abrahamic tradition. The animal's neck is cut with a single knife stroke while a prayer is said. The animal was then hung so the blood ran out of the body. This method with the prayer renders the meat *kosher* (Jewish tradition) or *halal* (Muslim tradition) and thus acceptable for consumption.

The Mongols, on the other hand, slaughtered animals in a different manner. The animal (usually a sheep) would be flipped onto its back, and then a slit was made into its chest. The Mongol then slipped his hand into the still-living animal and stilled its heart or ripped the aorta so that the animal died. For the animal, while certainly scary, it was actually less traumatic. Mongol custom forbade blood from entering the earth (unless done so in battle or hunting). Furthermore, the animal's blood was used for making sausages, so the Mongols had no desire to lose anything that could be consumed.

At different periods, some Mongol leaders ordered that all animals should be slaughtered in the Mongol fashion. Naturally, this created tension between the Mongols and the Muslim population. These periods of religious persecution, however, tended to be relatively brief and may have been done more so to assert Mongol primacy and remind everyone who was truly in charge.

This hope was not fulfilled. Il-Khanid forces invaded the area (1299–1300) but retreated shortly afterward; the last attempt failed in 1312. In conclusion, the practical influence of the Jews in the Mongol Empire was limited to the deeds of individuals; the effect of the Mongol Empire on the Jews was taken to the idealistic level, giving life to commune hopes for a Jewish national resurrection.

Na'ama O. Arom

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Hulegu; Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Italians

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Jurchen

The Jurchen (*nuzhen*, *nuzhi*, Jurchid, Jurched) were a Tungusic-speaking people whose homeland is today's eastern Manchuria. They established the Jin dynasty in the 12th century and the Qing dynasty under the name of Manchu in the 17th century.

The Jurchen lived in the mountains of eastern Manchuria and gradually dispersed across the plains of western and southern Manchuria and, in the 10th century, onto the fringes of the eastern steppes of Inner Mongolia. The Jurchen were not just hunters, pastoral nomadic herders, or settled farmers but rather a mix of the three ways of life depending on where they resided. They were also good falconers, and the Khitan and Chinese rulers enjoyed the falcons and hawks they trained.

The Jurchen spoke a Tungusic language, which belonged to the Altaic language family with the Evenki and Hezhe (Nanai) languages. Samples of the Jurchen vocabulary have been preserved in the *Jin shi* in Chinese transcriptions. The later Manchu language was derived from the Jurchen language.

After 926, the Khitan of the Liao dynasty categorized the Jurchen into two groups: civilized and uncivilized. The former group was politically subject to the direct rule of the Liao dynasty and mostly lived in the plains area; the latter group was only loosely attached to the Khitan and mainly dwelled in the mountains.

By the mid-10th century, the Jurchen united with the Wanyans, which became the dominate clan. Wanyan Aguda (1068–1123), the head of the Wanyan clan, rebelled against the Liao dynasty. After some preliminary but astonishing success, he became emperor of the Jin or “Golden” dynasty, which was the first Chinese dynastic name known to Europeans. As attested in Marco Polo's travel account, the Jin emperor was called “Golden King.” The Mongolian term “Altan Khan” (Golden Khan) for the Jin emperor also originated from the dynastic name.

The Jin threat from outside, an internal rebellion, and treason by major Liao generals accelerated the collapse of the Liao dynasty. The Liao-Jin struggle ended in total victory for the Jin, with a Jin army capturing the Liao emperor in 1125.

Seeking to regain the territory between today's Inner Mongolia and Beijing, the Song dynasty allied with the Jurchen to crush the Liao dynasty. However, the Liao defeated the Song, thereby revealing the weakness of the Song military. The Jurchen thereupon started their war against the Song dynasty and occupied northern China in 1127 as the Song court fled south of the Yangzi River. Henceforth, the Jurchen ruled northern China, Manchuria, and Inner Mongolia, while the native Chinese Song dynasty held southern China. The capital of Yanjing (today's Beijing) was renamed Zhongdu (Central Capital) in 1153.

The Jurchen culture developed after the Jin dynasty was established. The Jurchen created their own script in 1120 and reformed it in 1145 based on the Khitan large and small scripts, both derived from the Chinese writing system. Many Chinese canons and official documents were translated into Jurchen. The Jurchen writing systems were kept in use until the 14th century. After the conquest of northern China, the center of Jurchen influence moved into China, and Sinicization gradually became a serious issue.

Although in 1173 the Jin emperor Shizong proclaimed a series of regulations and rules to promote Jurchen culture, including clothes, names, and language, his nativization policy failed.

The distribution of the Jurchen people also changed after the establishment of the Jin dynasty. On the one hand, many Chinese people in northern China were forced to move to Manchuria. On the other hand, many Jurchen people moved to northern China and became garrison troops. By 1183 the estimated Jurchen population in northern China was around 4 million, around 10 percent of the total Jin population at that time.

The military system of the Jurchen was linked to household and clan. The Jurchen people also adopted the decimal organization. Three hundred households made up a clan (*mouke*), and 10 clans formed a *meng'an* (meaning "1,000"). The guards of northern frontiers were the *juyin* army, which consisted of the Jurchen's subjects, such as Khitan, Tangut, and Onggud, to protect against the attacks from nomadic peoples, such as the Mongols.

Unlike the Khitan, the Jurchen never controlled the Mongolian plateau. They made several raids into Mongolia and successfully conducted a divide-and-rule policy toward the Mongols to prevent any charismatic leader from unifying the plateau. For example, Ambaghai Khan, a powerful leader of the Mongols and Chinggis Khan's ancestor, was captured by the Tatars and sent to the Jin dynasty. Before his ascendance, Chinggis Khan was also once a vassal of the Jurchen.

The Jurchen ruled northern China for more than 100 years, until 1234. The Mongols gradually developed their power during the period of the Jin-Song conflict in the early 13th century. After a series of attacks, the Mongols took Zhongdu in 1215. The Jin moved to their southern capital of Kaifeng (former capital of the Northern Song dynasty). At the time, the Mongols were occupied with their Western Campaign in Central Asia and did not have enough strength to consolidate their rule north of the Huanghe River. In 1234 as part of a Mongol-Song joint military operation, the last Jurchen Jin emperor, Aizong Wanyan Shouxu, was captured by the Mongol army in Caizhou. This event marked the end of the Jin dynasty but not the rule of the Jurchen in China. After 400 years the Manchus, who founded the Qing dynasty, claimed that they originated from the Jurchen.

Wei-chieh Tsai

See also: *Groups and Organizations:* *Juyin*; Tatars; *Military:* Caizhou, Siege of; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Song Empire

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Juyin

The *juyin* consisted of a number of nomadic and seminomadic tribes that resided on the Jin Empire's border with the steppes of Mongolia as well as the border with Xi Xia. These tribes, which included the Onggud and Tatars at different points, accepted Jin suzerainty and served as a line of defense on the frontier in return for Jin protection and trading privileges. Other groups with a strong military tradition, such as the Khitans, also served as *juyin*.

Empires in China often used frontier tribes as a line of defense. The Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) made notable use of them, partially in an attempt to weaken the Xiongnu confederations (209 BCE–91 CE). Having come to the realization that military campaigns into the steppes were often militarily disastrous but also financially devastating, the Han switched policies and sought to cultivate relations with tribes close to the border. Ultimately the goal was to Sinicize them through culture (which proved elusive), but the enticement of better trading goods was sufficient to lure some tribes to their borders. The practice then became formalized. Discontents from the steppes also found service along the border of the various dynasties, and Chinggis Khan may have even been in Jin service as part of the *juyin* after his defeat by Jamuqa. The policy was not foolproof, however. Occasionally rulers or bureaucrats viewed the system as expensive or unnecessary and cut off trade. This then led to rebellion.

The various tribes and other groups that formed the *juyin* changed considerably over the decades. If a group grew too powerful, they might demand more or even directly raid the frontier and abrogate their *juyin* status. Or the Jin might revoke it for similar reasons. This occurred with the Tatars.

In 1198, a rebellion by the *juyin* tribes in southern Mongolia (south of the Gobi) occupied much of the Jin's attention. The ostensible cause of the rebellion was due to "inequitable treatment." In short, the *juyin* believed that they were not being treated fairly, and their trading privileges had been circumscribed. The rebellion erupted along the entire border and was not limited to a single group. The rebellion dragged on for several years, preventing the Jin from interfering with events north of the Gobi. Furthermore, the wars also affected trade with the northern nomads, leading to a deterioration of economic relations between the Jin and most of the steppe tribes. An added complication was that although Chinggis Khan controlled the northern Mongolian plateau, his influence filtered southward. Many nomads, including those among the *juyin*, looked to him rather than the Jin for aid and allegiance.

This attention only increased after the assassination of the Onggud leader Alaqush Digt Quri. The Jin, having learned of Alaqush's ties to Chinggis Khan, believed him to be behind the *juyin* rebellion. As the Onggud were former *juyin* this was a logical assumption, but no firm evidence existed. Jin agents also caused the Onggud to rebel against Chinggis Khan, which was quickly dealt with and resulted in Chinggis Khan's army encamping in Onggud pasture, bringing Alaqush's successor closer to Chinggis Khan. These actions only added to Chinggis Khan's grievances against the Jin.

Gradually, the *juyin* transferred their allegiance to Chinggis Khan. By 1211, Chinggis Khan was no longer involved in Xi Xia and saw the war as an opportunity to prevent the Jin from meddling in Mongolia, which he knew they eventually would do as the *juyin* rebellion ended. The Mongols entered into a three-pronged attack, with armies striking western Jin domains and central northern China as well as the Manchuria homeland of the Jurchen. Overall, all were small forays, with the focus being on bringing all of the *juyin* tribes under Mongol control. This was achieved quickly and without too much effort, as several already had established ties with Chinggis Khan. Now, however, they could not easily extricate themselves from it. Their forays into the Jin Empire itself kept the Jin from aiding those *juyin* who might resist Chinggis Khan.

Most of the *juyin* joined the Mongols willingly or were conscripted. Others, such as the Khitan, sought to become independent of the Jin and only joined the Mongols when it became clear that one could be part of the Jin Empire or part of the Mongols. By 1214 the *juyin* system no longer existed, and the Mongols did not take any measures to reinstate it.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Khitan; Onggud; Tatars; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Xi Xia

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Kereit

The Kereit are first mentioned in history in 1007 when their ruler and several others converted to Nestorian Christianity. This news came to the Nestorian *catholicus* in Merv in which the Kereit khan indicated that 200,000 of his subjects also converted. The *catholicus* sent two missionaries to assist. Although 200,000 converts is surely an exaggeration, it nonetheless indicates that a large conversion did take place. Considering that most, if not all, of the Kereit princesses acquired by the Mongols were Nestorian, one can be certain that Nestorian Christianity was commonplace among the elites if not the common Kereit. This mysterious ruler, known by his Christian name Marghuz (Markus), was Sariq Khan.

Originally, the Kereit lived southeast of the Kyrgyz, between the Altai Mountains and the Irtysh River, before migrating to the vicinity of the Orkhon River by the time

of Sariq Khan's conversion. Before long they were known to be raiding the Tatars in eastern Mongolia. Their success allowed them to extend eastward into Mongolian territory in the Onon-Kerulen River Basin and close to the borders of the Jin Empire in the south. Many Mongols may have been subjugated by the Kereit or may have voluntarily joined the Kereit after the Mongol Khanate collapsed in the face of Tatar and Jin pressure in the mid-12th century. The Kereit also developed cordial relations with Xi Xia.

Part of their success in the 12th century was tied to the collapse of the Liao dynasty (907–1125) in the face of the Jurchen invasions. The Kereit supported the migration of Yelu Dashi and the formation of Kara Khitai and gave at least nominal recognition of Khitan suzerainty. In the vacuum created by the collapse of Liao power in the steppes, however, the Kereit deftly stepped in and took advantage of the situation. All of this demonstrates that the Kereit were a formidable power in the Mongolian steppes by the mid-12th century, but it was not an easy path.

The conversion of Sariq Khan may have been influenced by the Naiman. He had been defeated by the Tatars, and the Kereit were forced to take refuge with the Naiman. With Naiman help and marriage alliances, the Kereit regrouped under Sariq Khan. The relationship with the Naiman was not perfect, and a split occurred. Without Naiman aid, Sariq Khan was once again defeated by the Tatars and turned over to the Jin Empire, where he was executed, although the year is uncertain.

Sariq Khan was succeeded by Qurjaqus, his son. Qurjaqus was the father of Toghril Ong Khan, the Kereit who figured most prominently in the rise of Chinggis Khan. We know very little about Qurjaqus, including precise reign dates. Toghril was captured by the Merkit in 1135 and enslaved for a few years; he was rescued but then also captured by the Tatars. When he was captured by the Merkit, he was seven years old.

After Qurjaqus's death, a power struggle ensued between Toghril and his stepbrothers (over a Naiman princess). Toghril emerged victorious and killed his stepbrothers but soon ran afoul with his uncle and fled to the Jin Empire. It was at this point that Yesugei, Chinggis Khan's father, aided him and helped establish Toghril on the Kereit throne. Toghril's uncle, the *gur-khan*, was forced to flee to Xi Xia. Again dates are elusive, but scholars believe these events took place in the 1150s.

With Yesugei's aid, Toghril became the khan of the Kereit and dominated central Mongolia, even though the taint of fratricide never left him. Yesugei also benefited from the relationship, rising in power despite being on the fringes of the Mongol leadership hierarchy. The two became *anda*, and Yesugei remained loyal to Toghril when the latter's younger brother Erke Kara forced Toghril from the throne in 1173. Yesugei, once again, helped restore him to power.

After Yesugei died, Kereit remained in power. Temujin did not seek Kereit aid until 1184 and reminded Toghril of his obligation to Yesugei. At this point the future Chinggis Khan entered Kereit service and learned much of the art of war under the tutelage of his *anda*, Jamuqa, who served as the Kereit's war leader. Even though Temujin and Jamuqa had a falling out and even battled, Temujin remained on good terms with Toghril and the Kereit in general. They worked together against the Merkit, Tatars, and Naiman.

Toghril may have once again lost his throne as well in the late 1180s to his brother Jaqa Gambu. Temujin may have supported Jaqa Gambu, but this is not certain. Toghril took refuge in the Jin Empire. With Jin assistance, it appears that Toghril once again procured the leadership of the Kereit in 1196.

Eventually, however, a split occurred. Temujin was sufficiently enmeshed in Kereit society that Toghril's son Senggum and others viewed him as threat and possible rival to succeed Toghril. This eventually led to a battle in 1203. Although the Kereit won initially, the Temujin regrouped at Lake Baljuna and then attacked the Kereit. Toghril fled and was killed by a Naiman while Senggum fled to Xi Xia. He was later forced out by the Tangut for his pillaging. Senggum was killed by Khalaj Turks while in further exile.

Although defeated and absorbed by the Mongols, the Kereit continued to possess an identity. Unlike most of the tribes that Chinggis Khan defeated, the Kereit were not broken apart and distributed among other units. Also, his children took many wives from the Kereit royalty, including Sorqoqtani who married Tolui. Clans who have taken Kereit as an identity (either real or fictional) exist even today among the Kazakhs, Uzbeks, Bashkorts, and Crimean Tatars.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Sorqoqtani-Beki; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Forest People; Merkit; Naiman; Nestorian Christians; Tangut; Tatars; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Kara Khitai; Xi Xia

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Khitan

The Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan), a seminomadic and proto-Mongolian ethnicity, originated in the eastern part of modern-day Inner Mongolia, People's Republic of China. They were originally part of the ancient Xianbai confederation and then the Turk Empire as well as being subjects of the Tang Empire (618–907) at different points in the seventh century. In 755 they were part of the Uyghur Empire (744–840). With the fall of the Uyghur Empire, the Khitan remained independent and began to expand under their khan, Qinde (r. 901–907).

The establishment of an empire began with Qinde's successor, Abaoji of the Yelu clan. With the transfer of power to the Yelu, the Khitan's fortunes changed. Abaoji

(r. 907–927) not only ruled Khitan but also Chinese settlers and began to meddle in northern China. He secured his power by killing rivals and in 916 declared himself *huangdi* (emperor). Although he adopted a Chinese title and discontinued the use of “khan,” Abaoji remained tied to the steppe, building a capital named Shinjing. While Abaoji secured the steppes and much of Manchuria, his successor, Deguang (927–947), conquered northern China, which consisted of small kingdoms in the wake of the collapse of the Tang Empire. With a large swath of Chinese territory under his control, Deguang proclaimed the Liao dynasty with the intention of making the new state more inclusive, as the Khitan were vastly outnumbered by their Han subjects.

In 979, the Song Empire attempted to conquer the Khitan’s Chinese possessions. Despite some initial successes the Song were defeated, and the Liao Empire struck back vigorously. The war continued until 1004, with the border following the Huanghe River. Although the Song began the war, it ended with them paying annual tribute to the Liao. Similar arrangements were reached with Koryo (Korea) and Xi Xia.

Between the peace treaty with the Song Empire and the Khitan’s efforts to conquer Koryo and Xi Xia, they were occupied with affairs in Mongolia. While much of



“A Rest-Stop for the Khitan Khan” (right panel), from the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period (907–960 CE). The Khitans were conquered by the Jurchen who established the Jin Empire. Refugees, however, established a new empire in the west, known as Kara Khitai. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

southern region (present-day Inner Mongolia) was firmly under Khitan control, they also sought to establish control of eastern and central Mongolia. The Liao established their control as far north as the Kerulen River and secured it with a line of garrison posts. The Kereit and Tatars both became subjects of the Liao Empire. The Tatars rebelled in 1093, which grew into a larger movement and almost ended Liao control of Mongolia. The Liao finally suppressed the rebellion in 1102.

Despite the Liao's success, the rebellion demonstrated the Liao weakness. In 1114, a Jurchen chieftain named Aguda (1068–1123) led a rebellion. He defeated a Liao army in Manchuria and declared the Jin dynasty in 1115. With his success, other groups also rebelled. Gradually Aguda consolidated power and continued to defeat Liao forces, sacking Shangjing in 1120. Other Liao strongholds fell quickly afterward. One Khitan prince, Yelu Dashi, successfully led many Khitan into Mongolia and then into Central Asia to establish Kara Khitai.

Despite their defeat by the Jurchen, the Khitan subjects in the new Jin Empire remained important. The Jin adopted many Khitan ruling practices, including using their writing script as the basis for a new Jurchen writing system. Although the Jurchen distrusted the Khitan, they found employment in the Jurchen bureaucracy and also formed military units. Nonetheless, the Khitan did not acquiesce easily to Jurchen rule. The Khitan rebelled from 1159 to 1164. The rebellion ended with the execution of all surviving members of the Liao family.

Opportunity to avenge the defeat did not occur until the rise of Chinggis Khan. Several Khitan joined him even before he invaded the empire, such as Yelu Ahai and Tuhua who were members of the Baljuna Covenant. When Chinggis Khan did invade the Jin Empire, the Khitan did not rise up en masse against the empire. Khitan units fought the Mongols and only gradually deserted to the Mongols when the fortunes of war shifted clearly to favor Chinggis Khan. Some Khitan attempted to create an independent kingdom in Manchuria and Korea but met defeat by the Mongols in 1212.

Despite this historically minor event, the Khitan became trusted partners in the Mongol Empire. The Mongols adopted many governing structures as well as military influences from the Khitan, such as the *keshig* (bodyguard) system and decimal units. Figures such as Yelu Chucai, who also served in the Jin bureaucracy, rose to important positions within the Mongol hierarchy.

Although the Khitan played an important role in the establishment of the Mongol Empire, Khubilai Khan did not hold them in as high a favor. When Khubilai Khan created his system of population organization, the Khitan were not included as part of the Mongols (as were nomads) or even Semuren (as were the Uyghurs) but instead were included with the northern Chinese, like the Jurchen and Hans. His rationale was simply that they were no longer as necessary, as the Mongols increasingly became literate and he had his own affinity for the Chinese.

Gradually the Khitan disappeared, assimilated into the Mongol and Chinese population. Traces of the Khitan still remain in Inner Mongolian in family names (Yelu). Additionally, the Daur Mongols identify with the Khitan. While Liao was the Chinese name for the Khitan Empire, the Khitan word was Daur Gurun (Daur dynasty).

Timothy May

THE RISE AND FALL OF A LANGUAGE

The Khitan language is closely related to Mongolian and is part of the Altaic language family. The Khitan developed two scripts. The first script was strongly influenced by Chinese, with each character representing one word. It was created in 920 and written vertically and in columns from right to left. The second script, known as “large script,” was created in 925. The writing system contains some logograms (1 character equals 1 word), while others represent syllables. Only 130 characters of an extant 370 characters are known. As a result, the language cannot be read easily except by a few scholars.

After the collapse of the Liao Empire (907–1125), the language and script continued to be used in Kara Khitai and among Khitan in the Jin Empire. While Khitan served in the Mongol Empire in large numbers, the language and script fell out of disfavor as the Khitan assimilated with the Mongols and the Chinese and adopted their respective languages.

See also: *Organization and Administration: Keshik; Individuals: Chinggis Khan; Khublai Khan; Groups and Organizations: Jurchen; Kereit; Tatars; Key Places: Jin Empire; Kara Khitai; Song Empire*

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Kipchaks

The Turkic nomads who inhabited the steppes of Eurasia that stretched from the Carpathian Mountains into modern-day Kazakhstan were primarily from one dominant group and known by various names. In the Islamic sources they appear as Kipchaks (with various spellings). The Rus’ called them Polovtsy, and in Latin they were called Cuman. The Rus’ and Latin sources take their names from the Turkic word *quman*, meaning “pale yellow.” Cuman is a clear derivative, but Polovtsy is the Slavic equivalent of “pale yellow.” They were also known by other terms in other languages, usually being the equivalent of “pale yellow.” The Kipchaks, as they called themselves, were a nomadic Turkic people who existed in a loose confederation.

The Kipchaks appear to have originated from the region of the Altai Mountains during the period of the Turk Empire in the 8th century. By the 10th century they had migrated to the region of Tobol and Syr Darya. They may have been in the region where

Oghuz Turk tribes, such as the Seljuks, began migrating across the Syr Darya River and eventually into Khurasan. Others moved north into Siberia, while still more migrated westward to the Caspian and Pontic steppes. Soon the entire belt of steppeland was referred to as the Kipchak steppes.

Soon several confederations of Kipchaks emerged. For most of their history, there were three major confederations. One was based around the Volga and Ural Rivers, and another was based in Siberia. The third dominated the steppe region north of the Syr Darya, which was often referred to as the Qangli. They developed strong marriage ties with the Khwarazmian Empire. Two other groups eventually formed in the western steppes as well, presumably offshoots of the Volga-Ural confederation. One confederation coalesced in the Pontic steppes north of the Black Sea and dispersed the Pechenegs who nomadized there previously. Some legends indicate that Kipchaks entered the region to escape the domination of the Khitan. The Islamic sources indicate that this migration began in the early 11th century. If so, this particular wave of Kipchaks fled from the Liao dynasty and not Kara Khitai. As a result, in the west two confederations formed, with one nomadizing along the Don River and the other near the Dnieper River region.

The Kipchaks had varied relations with each other as well as the sedentary states they bordered. As with the Qanglis, marriage alliances were not uncommon and were found not only with the Khwarazmian Empire but also with the various Rus' principalities. Military alliances were also not uncommon and sometimes involved Kipchaks fighting Kipchaks. This was particularly common among those Kipchaks who established relations with the Rus'. The princely feuds offered the Kipchaks ample opportunities for plunder. While the Kipchaks were nomads, they also established a few small towns to serve as trade centers. Although peaceful relations did exist, the Kipchaks were a martial people as well and frequently raided the borders of their neighbors. Much of the 12th century was turbulent for those who shared borders with the Kipchaks. To be sure, the Kipchaks did not instigate all of the disturbances and were often recruited by the sedentary states as auxiliary troops. The Rus' and the Khwarazmian Empire are the best-known examples, but they were not the only ones. The Kingdom of Georgia recruited 40,000 Kipchaks in the 12th century.

Nonetheless, the Kipchaks were quarrelsome enough on their own that the Rus' put aside their own feuds to launch punitive raids against the Kipchaks on several occasions throughout the 12th century. The internal divisions of the Kipchaks as well as the Rus' prevented both from ever dealing a truly decisive blow. Thus, a cycle of alliances, raids, and counterraids developed. As evidenced by the alliance of southern Rus' princes and Kipchaks in the Battle of the Kalka River, little had changed in these relations in the early 13th century.

The Kipchaks practiced a form of shamanism, but other religions made inroads as well. Among the Kipchaks near the Khwarazmian Empire and other Islamic centers, some conversion occurred. It was, however, not significant enough to cause fundamental changes in Kipchak society in the 12th century. Additionally, in the early 13th century (1227), Christian missionaries from Hungary made an effort to establish a bishopric in Cumania, as the western steppes were known. The missionary efforts had some success, but the Kipchaks did not convert in droves as the Papacy had hoped. In

a sense, it was the kingdom of Hungary's effort to tame the Kipchaks at their borders through religion. King Bela IV also viewed it as a strategic effort to guard against a new menace in the steppes.

Kipchak independence came to an end, however, with the Mongol conquest of the Kipchak steppes. The Kipchak confederations were overwhelmed and succumbed to the Mongols by the end of 1240. Those who submitted were then incorporated into the Mongols and greatly augmented the Mongol armies. Others fled to Hungary and then into the Balkan Mountains. Many Kipchaks even sold their children to slave traders to make their escape. The Mongols also sold excess prisoners. Many of these were then purchased as Mamluks in the Islamic world, where they eventually established the Mamluk Sultanate.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Khurasan; *Groups and Organizations:* Khitan; Mamluks; *Military:* Kalka River, Battle of the; *Key Places:* Kara Khitai; Khwarazmian Empire; Kipchak Steppes; Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 3

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Mamluks

The Mamluk (slave) institution entered Islamic civilization in the ninth century as a way for the Abbasid caliphs to counter their reliance on military warlords and tribal leaders. The caliphs sought to create a dependable body of warriors loyal only to them as a counterbalance to the shifting rivalries of other regional power brokers. Most of the earliest Mamluks were Turks, whose prowess on horseback and skills in archery were highly prized. Over the centuries Mamluks became a common feature in Muslim armies throughout the Islamic world, although always limited in number due to their expense. Typically Mamluks were purchased just as they approached puberty—thus they may have had some early skills but were still impressionable and could be taught. Mamluks were not slaves per se but slaves who were trained, educated about Islam (although some never converted), and then manumitted. They usually remained intensely loyal to the man who manumitted them but less so to their master's successor, who often had his own Mamluks.

Although his predecessor Caliph Mamun (r. 813–833) had some Mamluks, the Abbasid caliph Mutasim (r. 833–842) purchased large numbers of Turkic slaves. Trained and privileged, the Mamluks served as bodyguards and soldiers but also as governors and generals. Unfortunately, their privileges eventually transformed them into a praetorian guard, often in the worst possible ways. Even when the court moved from Baghdad to the palace city of Samarra, the Mamluks still proved troublesome and were crushed in a very bloody incident in 869–870. After this no adults were purchased, and the Mamluk system became institutionalized.

Over the next few centuries amirs (commanders) and princes bought Mamluks, ranging from a handful to dozens. Not until al-Salih Ayyubi (r. 1240–1249) reigned in Egypt were they again purchased by a single ruler in vast numbers, largely due to the availability of Kipchak slaves—a result of the Mongol conquest of the Kipchak

steppes. His Mamluks played a key role in the Battle of La Forbie in 1244, when al-Salih defeated a combined force of crusaders and Syrian princes at Gaza. Al-Salih's victory allowed him to capture Jerusalem, which the crusaders had regained during the Fifth Crusade through diplomacy by Holy Roman emperor Frederick II. This second loss of Jerusalem triggered the Seventh Crusade, led by King Louis IX of France.

The Seventh Crusade further propelled the Mamluks in importance. Indeed, the Mamluks were the Muslim answer to their most formidable foes: the crusading military orders and the Mongols. In Egypt the Mamluks seized power in 1250 during Louis IX's (Saint Louis) ill-fated crusade to Egypt and created the Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517), which saved Egypt not only from the crusaders but also from the Mongols.

From 1250 to 1260, the Mamluks fought among themselves and staved off attacks by Syrian Ayyubid princes. In 1260, the threat of the Mongols forced the Mamluks to dispense of having a puppet king. A Mamluk named Qutuz took the throne and led the Mamluks to victory against the Mongols at Ayn Jalut (in modern-day Israel). Afterward



Mamluk cavalry trained regularly when not at war. The Mamluks proved to be among the most formidable foes of the Mongols, partially due to their continuous preparation for war. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

he was killed by Baybars, one of his generals. Under Baybars, the Mamluks ruled an empire that included Egypt and Syria and stretched into Arabia and even to Yemen on occasion. Baybars also institutionalized the Mamluk Army and the training system that made them possibly the best soldiers of the medieval world.

Strategically, the Mamluks focused on defensive measures against the Mongols. The Mamluks tried to minimize the Mongol numeric advantage by creating a cordon sanitaire using scorched-earth policies on the frontier to eliminate pasturelands. This limited the number of men the Mongols could bring, as each man typically brought spare horses. In addition, the Mamluks realized the limitations of their own military. Having fewer men, they rarely invaded Mongol territory. Typically they struck at Mongol allies such as the Principality of Antioch or Cilicia. In addition, they routinely made treaties with individual crusader princes to isolate targets and reduce them one by one. In 1291 the Mamluks retook Acre, ending almost 200 years of crusader states in the Near East. Afterward the Mamluks razed all of the coastal fortifications so that if they returned, the crusaders would not be able to establish a toehold.

The Mongol Il-Khanate in the Middle East collapsed in 1335, relieving the Mamluks of a major threat. Other threats existed, but they were minor. With the reduced pressure, the martial prowess of the Mamluks gradually diminished. Although they remained a potent force against Tamerlane in 1400–1401 and the Ottomans in the 16th century, they were found wanting. This led to their defeat by the Ottoman sultan Selim the Grim (1465–1520) when he conquered Syria in 1516 and then crushed the

MAMLUK ARMY

The Mamluk Army was relatively small, with an emphasis on quality over quantity. The main body of the army consisted of the Royal Mamluks (*mamluk sultaniyya*), who also served as the center of the army on the battlefield. The Royal Mamluks rarely numbered more than 10,000. They were the elite of the Mamluk forces and carried out most of the fighting. Virtually all were stationed in Cairo. Other amirs also had their own Mamluks, which along with the *halqa* or non-Mamluk cavalry, comprised the rest of the army. Due to garrisoning the numerous fortresses of Syria, particularly the Euphrates River border with the Mongols, the non-Mamluk forces used in the sultanate were almost double the number of Mamluks.

In battle the Mamluks served as medium or heavy cavalry, wearing chain mail armor and helmets and carrying shields, lances, and other melee weapons such as the sword and mace. Every Mamluk also carried a composite bow. As their primary opponents were the Mongols and the Franks of the crusader states, they became adept at fighting both foes. Tactically, against the Mongols the Mamluks typically remained on the defensive until an opportune moment came. Although the Mamluks lacked the mounts to maintain the constant movement that the Mongols used, their horses were large enough to support the weight of a more heavily armored man and were capable of shock tactics. Indeed, in this respect they were the equal of the Knights Templar. In addition, the Mamluks maintained the utmost discipline and rarely succumbed to feigned retreats, as they were familiar with nomadic warfare.

Mamluks in 1517 in Egypt. Despite their defeat, the Mamluk existence continued in Egypt as part of the Ottoman Empire. Napoleon encountered them in 1798 when he invaded Egypt. Not until 1811 did the Mamluk institution end with the rise of Muhammad Ali. He killed their leaders and ultimately followed the Napoleonic method of creating an army by conscripting the Egyptian peasantry, but only after his own efforts of forming a slave-based army from Sudanese slaves failed.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; *Individuals:* Baybars I; Hulegu; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; *Military:* Ayn Jalut, Battle of; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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Merkit

The Merkit occupied the territories of the lower Selenge River and where it joins the Orkhon River, south of Lake Baikal. The Merkit lived on the fringes of the territories of the Forest People to the north, while the Kereit were to the south. The Merkit were pastoral nomads, but some agriculture also existed. The Mongols typically referred to the Merkit as the Gurvan Merkit (Three Merkit), but it is known that at least six major clans or tribes existed. The dominant tribe during the rise of Chinggis Khan was the Uduyit clan.

The first mention of the Merkit appears in the sources for the Liao dynasty (907–1125) during the 11th century, when the Merkit allied with the Kereit against the Liao dynasty. It may have been during this time that some of the Kereit converted to Nestorian Christianity. Although Christianity appears to have made inroads among the Merkit, shamanism remained the dominant religious influence among them. Their hostility toward Kara Khitai appears opportunistic rather than systematic, as many Merkit joined Khitan refugees in the creation of the empire of Kara Khitai in 1129.

Due to their distant location from sedentary centers that kept written histories, such as the Jin Empire, Kara Khitai, and the Islamic world, the Merkit disappear from history until the rise of Chinggis Khan, as they played an integral role in his life. Yesugei married Hoelun after stealing her from her Merkit husband, Childeu. Yesugei's strength and ties with Toghril, khan of the Kereit, must have convinced the Merkit not to

retaliate against Yesugei. Vengeance, however, came a generation later when the Merkit raided Temujin's (the future Chinggis Khan) camp and kidnapped Borte.

Temujin was able to call upon the aid of Toghril as well as Temujin's *anda*, Jamuqa, to retrieve her. Such an operation took months to organize and execute. Thus, when Borte was recovered she was pregnant. Although Temujin always claimed the child as his, suspicions lingered that the father was actually a Merkit. The rescue operation caught the Merkit by surprise and scattered them. Both the Mongols and the Kerait raided them frequently afterward.

These attacks led to the Merkit forming alliances with the Naiman as well as joining Jamuqa's confederation against Toghril and Temujin. The alliance with the Naiman was sealed with the marriage of the Naiman princess, Toregene, to Toqtoa Beki of the Merkit. Unfortunately, this led some of the historical sources to indicate that Toregene was a Merkit and not a Naiman in origin. Merkit forces were present with the Naiman at the Battle of Chakirmaut in 1204. The true submission of the Merkit came in 1205, when the Mongols defeated them at Qaradal Huja'ur. Toqtoa Beki, the primary Merkit leader, escaped and led a sizable number of the Merkit along with his sons across the Altai Mountains and joined the Naiman once again. After the defeat at the Battle of the Irtysh River, Toqtoa Beki lay dead, and the Naiman-Merkit alliance shattered, with the two tribes fleeing in different directions. While the Naiman ultimately found refuge in Kara Khitai, the Merkit, led by Toqtoa Beki's sons, fled into the Kipchak steppes, where they found refuge among the Kipchaks. This proved to be short-lived, however, as Subedei led a Mongol army that eradicated them in 1218. Subedei's campaign occurred after the Merkit rebelled against Chinggis Khan in 1216. After quelling the rebellion, the surviving Merkit in Mongolia were enslaved. Having determined that the Merkit would be susceptible to rebellion should Toqtoa Beki's sons return, Chinggis Khan sent Subedei to ensure that an independent Merkit entity ceased to exist.

Although the Merkit were largely enslaved, a few notable Merkit existed afterward. The most well known was Oghul Qaimish, the wife of Guyuk Khan. Her mismanagement of the empire during the period of her regency led to the Toluid Revolution. Another queen was Qulan Khatun, who became the wife of Chinggis Khan when her

RULES FOR MARRIAGE

All of the tribes in Mongolia practiced exogamy, or marriages between members of different clans and tribes. While it was not uncommon for a man to acquire a wife via raiding and carrying off women as part of the plunder, less violent practices also existed.

When arranging for a marriage with another tribe, certain protocols were arranged and upheld. The groom's party was small, thus preventing the possibility that it could disguise a raid. Also, it was the societal norm not to attack a wedding party. The reasons were simple. If the system broke down, then exogamous marriages would become increasingly difficult and result in numerous feuds. Yesugei's abduction of Hoelun led to the Merkit's kidnapping of Borte—exactly the type of generation-spanning feud that unspoken protocols of the steppes were meant to prevent.

father Dayir Usun submitted to Chinggis Khan after the Battle of Chakirmaut. Her brother Jamal Khwaja, an apparent Muslim convert, secured a position as a commander of 100 in Chinggis Khan's bodyguard. Another notable Merkit was Bayan (not the general), who served as a grand councilor of the Yuan Empire from 1335 to 1340.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Borte; Guyuk; Hoelun; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; *Groups and Organizations:* Forest People; Kereit; Kipchaks; Naiman; *Key Events:* Toluid Revolution; *Military:* Irtysh River, Battle of the; Subedei; *Key Places:* Kara Khitai; Kipchak Steppes

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Naiman

The Naiman dominated the region on both sides of the Altai Mountains. In the context of the rise of the Mongol Empire, the Naiman dominated western Mongolia. They are first mentioned in the sources during the 11th century but do not appear to have become a major power until the 12th century. Their territory stretched from the Orkhon Valley in Mongolia in the east and to beyond the Irtysh River in the west, where it bordered Kara Khitai. Their territory bordered Uyghuristan in the south, and the northern limits infringed on the Kirghiz territory in Siberia. In the Chinese and Khitan sources the Naiman are known as the Nianbage or Nianba'en. The Mongols referred to them as the Naiman, as *naiman* means "eight," the number of the tribes that comprised the Naiman confederation. While the Mongols often viewed the Naiman as one group, geography (the Altai Mountains) often divided them into two confederations, usually ruled by brothers. Under powerful leaders, the Naiman could exist as a single unified confederation, such as during the reign of Tayang Khan (d. 1204).

The Naiman's power wavered and demonstrated the fragility of a confederated empire. At the height of their power they exerted influence well beyond their normal pastures. In the 1160s under Inancha Bilge Khan, the Kereit were under their sway, as were the Onggud. Although it is not conclusive, there is some evidence to suggest that they exerted influence over some of the Forest People, such the Oirat and Kirghiz. Their efforts to reestablish dominance over the Kereit extended into the rise of Chinggis Khan as they joined the confederation led by Jamuqa against Toghril and Temujin (Chinggis Khan). Toghril also fought the Naiman to ensure his own independence from them. In

1202, Temujin and Toghril defeated Buyruq Khan of the eastern Naiman. Toghril, however, was later defeated by Kokse'u-Sabraq, a general who then added western Naiman to the territory of Tayang Khan, the ruler of the western Naiman. Thus, when Chinggis Khan fought the Naiman in the Battle of Chakirmaut, he faced a unified Naiman confederation.

It is clear from the sources that the Naiman viewed the Mongols as unrefined savages. The Naiman were much more developed in terms of institutions. Whereas leadership among the Mongols passed between a number of families, the Naiman had a single dynasty. While the confederation might be split into two halves, this was due to geography, not to internecine competition between clans. Additionally, the Naiman were literate, although this only applied to the court. Many had also embraced a universal religion in Nestorian Christianity, although shamanism still existed among them. Both of these developments came from their contact with the Uyghurs and Kara Khitai, where a Nestorian bishopric existed in Samarkand. The Mongols only adopted a writing system after their defeat of the Naiman, when they acquired Tatar-Tong'a, a Uyghur court scribe who was in the employ of the Naiman. It is possible that many of the decisions about the organization of the Yeke Monggol Ulus at the *quriltai* of 1206 were influenced by the structure of the Naiman.

After the Mongol victory in the Battle of Chakirmaut, the Naiman continued to resist but were defeated in the Battle of the Irtysh River. Guchulug, the surviving leader of the Naiman, found refuge in Kara Khitai. This is not surprising, as Kara Khitai extended a nominal sovereignty over the western Naiman until 1175, when the Naiman gave nominal recognition to the sovereignty of the Jin Empire. There they remained a potent force and even briefly seized power. This attracted the attention of Chinggis Khan, who dispatched an army. Under the command of Jebe, they conquered Kara Khitai and killed Guchulug.

The Naiman did not disappear. Many rose to high positions, such as Ket Buqa, the general who lost in the Battle of Ayn Jalut. Toregene Khatun was also a Naiman. For the rest of the Naiman, it is not always clear how they fit into the Yeke Monggol Ulus. Most nomads were incorporated into the Mongols, yet in the Yuan Empire, the Naiman appear as Semuren. In the Golden Horde, the Naiman were present as nomads. In the former Mongol Empire, the Naiman exist today at least as a clan name among the modern-day Kazakhs and Kyrgyz. Naiman clans also exist among the Mongols in both the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in China and in Mongolia.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Toregene Khatun; *Organization and Administration:* Writing Systems; Yuan Empire; *Groups and Organizations:* Kereit; Khitan; Merkit; Nestorian Christians; Oirat; Semuren; *Military:* Ayn Jalut, Battle of; Chakirmaut, Battle of; Irtysh River, Battle of the; *Key Places:* Kara Khitai; Uyghuristan

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Nestorian Christians

The Church of the East, known in the sources as Nestorianism, began in the fifth century. It was but one of many schisms in Christian theology in the late Roman Empire. The Church of the East, as its members refer to it, subscribed to the views of Nestorius regarding the nature of Jesus Christ. These views were declared heretical at the Council of Ephesus (located in modern-day Turkey) in 431. The council was as much political as religious in nature and gave the opponents of Nestorius an opportunity to discredit him.

The sect's founder and patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius (386–451), argued that the Virgin Mary was not Theokotos, or God Bearer, nor could she be considered the mother of God, as God was timeless and without beginning and thus could not be born in a woman. Nestorius's view suggested instead that Mary simply gave birth to a vessel



The Church of Mary in Ephesus, located in modern Turkey, was the setting of the Third Ecumenical Council in 431. It was at this council that the Patriarch Nestorius was condemned and his followers then persecuted. They became known by their detractors as Nestorians. (Angel Yordanov/Dreamstime.com)

filled with the Holy Spirit or Jesus. In this sense, Nestorius viewed Mary as the Christokos or Anthropokos, or Mother of Christ/Mother of the Man. Nestorius's views were controversial at the time, not the least because of the popularity of the Virgin Mary. The real controversy was much less the role of Mary but the very nature of Christ. What exactly did Mary give birth to? Was it truly the son of God or a vessel filled with God? Was Jesus human, or was he completely divine? If he was divine, could he really suffer and die on the cross? If he was human, was he truly the son of God? In short, Nestorius publicly opened a Pandora's box of questions that many theologians had considered but not truly debated. Nestorius was not alone in viewing Christ's nature as being *dyophysite*, or dual natured (human and divine); however, at the Council of Ephesus his view lacked sufficient support, and his hotheaded nature undermined his actions. He was also banished by Emperor Theodosius II (r. 421–450) at the insistence of the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, Cyril (r. 412–444) and John (r. 428–442), respectively.

With Nestorius's failure at Ephesus, Nestorianism, as the sect's detractors referred to it, faced persecution, although it found great popularity in what is now eastern Turkey, Armenia, Syria, and Iraq. As persecution increased, many fled to the Sasanid Empire (224–651) and settled in Nisibis, where the Sasanids permitted them a great deal of autonomy, particularly in their religious affairs. Here they primarily wrote and spoke in Syriac and were permitted to travel throughout the empire, where their religion spread. Despite its growth, Nestorianism never seriously challenged the primary religion of the empire, Zoroastrianism. Nestorianism did, however, spread into Central Asia, India, and even China. A patriarchate was established in China in 774 with several churches.

Meanwhile in Central Asia, the Church of the East also found success and stability. In the 11th century, the metropolitan of Merv (in modern-day Turkmenistan), Abhd-Iso, received envoys from the Kereit in Mongolia requesting missionaries. These were promptly dispatched. Adopting a syncretic approach, in which the missionaries found ways to accommodate foreign religious beliefs with the local customs, the missionaries had great success in converting a sizable portion of not only the Kereit but also the Naiman and Onggud nomads.

Thus, when Chinggis Khan united Mongolia, there was a sizable Nestorian population already in Mongolia. As most of the Kereit aristocracy belonged to the Church of the East, several high-ranking queens (including Sorqoqtani and Doquz Khatun), officials, and generals were Nestorians. While they never pushed for Nestorianism to become the state religion, during the Mongol Empire Nestorianism did find protection and support, particularly in the Middle East. The fact that several influential Mongols were Nestorian Christians also erroneously led various popes to believe that the Mongols would be ripe for conversion to Catholicism. The Mongol Empire also made it possible to unite the disparate Nestorian communities across the empire. This permitted a Uyghur from modern-day China to become the catholicos (head) of the Church of the East, centered in Baghdad. On his journey to Baghdad, Yahbh-Allah III was accompanied by Rabban Sawma, who then became an Il-Khanid ambassador to Europe. Rabban Sawma left us a detailed account of his journey that reveals not only much about relations with Europe but also the state of the Nestorians within the postdissolution Mongol Empire.

This support ended as the Mongol Empire drifted from a single entity into four separate realms. In the Yuan Empire the Church of the East flourished, although Catholicism soon competed with it. With the collapse of the Yuan Empire, the Church of the East disappeared. The Ming did not encourage the religion and did not encourage its continuation. A key factor was also that the land route to the Middle East was very dangerous. Nestorianism gradually died out in the Chagatayid domains as Islam became more dominant. The same situation occurred in the Golden Horde. In the Il-Khanate, where the Church of the East was best situated, the Nestorians also suffered. For the first half of the Il-Khanate, the church enjoyed the favor of several Mongol queens and high-ranking officials. This changed with the rise of Ghazan. His conversion started a route of persecution and closure of churches. He gradually moderated his views, but the heyday of the Church of the East had passed.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Chagatai Khanate; Golden Horde; Yuan Empire; *Key Events:* Rabban Sawma, Mission of

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Oirat

The Oirat, whose name means “Forest People,” were originally a Siberian group, probably not even pastoral nomads at first. They slowly moved into the steppe no later than the 13th century and, with the subsequent demographic depletion of Mongolia during and after the end of the Mongol Empire, became the dominant group there. Later they fought actively with China—an Oirat group even took the emperor captive—and later fought the Qing, who finally subdued the Oirat, by then mostly called Zhunghars (People on the Right), in the 18th century using modern firearms of the time, including horse-mobile cannons well supported by logistically savvy Chinese. Descendants of the Oirat still live under various names mainly in Mongolia but also on the Volga River in Russia, where a group migrated in the 17th century and still reside. These are known as Kalmyks (Those-Left-Behind or Those Remaining). They still retain both their Buddhism and Oirat languages, written in Cyrillic but also using a traditional Oirat script based on the Uyghur script.

The earliest historical source to mention the Oirat is *The Secret History of the Mongols*, which lumps them with various other then primitive groups situated to the north

and northwest of Mongolia as “Forest Peoples” (Middle Mongolian *hoi-yin irgen*). Recently the area in question has been characterized by its mixed economy, including well-developed reindeer herding (by the Soyot-Tuvinians). This was probably true in the early period of the Mongolian Empire as well.

On the whole, these Forest Peoples, the Oirat in particular, seem to have guarded their independence assiduously and to have played little role in events taking place at the time to their south on the steppes of Mongolia. Only circa 1207–1208 did the Mongols begin to think of integrating them into their world order. Jochi, eldest son of Chinggis Khan, receiving pastures in the extreme western portions of his father’s new empire, took charge. It was an Oirat émigré, Quduqa Beki, who led Mongols to his own people, then nomadizing along the Yenissei River and its tributaries.

Although Jochi had now established firm contact with the Forest Peoples, Mongol power in the area remained weak. It was only after the reimposition of Mongolian control after a general uprising of Forest Peoples in 1217–1218 that the area and its peoples truly became part of the empire. Even then there is little evidence that the Mongolian Empire had much direct impact on them or that the existing social units of the Oirat were arbitrarily broken up, as was the case with most other groups located farther south. Nor is there much evidence for any broad-based dispersal of Oirat on an individual, voluntary basis during this period, although some distinguished Oirat serving far afield from Mongolia are noticed. One was Arghun-aqa, the longtime head of the Mongol administration in Iran and Khurasan. Oirat also appear among Golden Horde groups.

Other than stray references to such individuals, our sources have comparatively little to say about Oirat as a whole for much of the 13th and 14th centuries. When information does become available again, it is abundantly clear that major changes have taken place. Oirat territories have expanded greatly and have been pushed far to the west and south. They now extend from north of Datong in China and as far west as Hami and Beshbaliq in what is now Chinese Turkestan. Also, there were clearly far more Oirat in the 14th century. In fact, by that time the Oirat had already become one of the largest, if not the largest, ethnic groups in Mongolia.

At first the Oirat seem to have supported the Northern Yuan emperors, ruling the successor khanate for China and Mongolia, but as the former imperial line became more and more ephemeral, Oirat pretensions grew. This culminated in the assassination in 1399 or 1401 (the tradition varies) of Elbeg Nigulesugchi, grandson and fourth successor of Toghon Temur, last Yuan and first Northern Yuan emperor, by the Oirat prince Choros Batula Chingsan (d. ca. 1416) and his brother Ugechi Qasaga. Various motives are given for the killing (a blood feud seems to have been involved), but whatever its ultimate cause, the event clearly signified the bankruptcy of Northern Yuan, whose emperors continued to rule but without much power, and the rise of a new and more vigorous Mongolian group as competitor for the leadership of Mongolia and for power, even the office of great khan, previously reserved for the old ruling house.

Subsequently, with the disappearance of Northern Yuan as an active element, the Oirat became the most important steppe group and at one point even seriously threatened the Chinese Ming dynasty. There are a number of reasons for this sudden

emergence of the Oirat at a time of general Mongol weakness. The most important is that the Oirat had been relatively isolated from the process that gave rise to the Mongolian Empire and were relatively untouched by it. As a consequence, as the Mongolian tide of empire receded, the Oirat proved to be well positioned not only to assert themselves politically but also to move physically into the main part of the Mongolian steppe to fill a demographic vacuum in an age-old pattern. A second reason seems to have been changes going on within Oirat society itself, as the Oirat made their final transition from being a mixed society of hunter-gatherers and pastoralists into one of full steppe pastoralism, putting the Oirat into the position of being stripped for mobility and for expansion at a time when other Mongolian groups were struggling just to survive.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Government and Politics:* Northern Yuan; *Organization and Administration:* Khurasan; *Writing Systems:* Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Jochi; *Groups and Organizations:* Forest People; *Objects and Artifacts:* *The Secret History of the Mongols*

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Onggirad

The Onggirad, also known as the Qonggirad, were one of the traditional associations of the Mongolian steppe, those groups determining such things as access to pasture and who were important because they became a traditional partner for marriage exchange with the ruling house and the long-term alliance they maintained with it to the end of Mongolian rule in China and beyond. All of this began when Temujin, the future Chinggis Khan, was quite young. When Temujin was 9 years old, his father Yesugei set out to visit the Olqunu'ud, his maternal relatives, seeking a bride for his son. According to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, Chinggis Khan never actually arrived among the Olqunu'ud and instead encountered his in-law (*quda*), the Onggirad Dei Sechen, who, impressed with Temujin's potential and told in a vision of the arrival of the future khan and his father, proposed his own daughter instead and asked Yesugei to take a look. He too was impressed by the 10-year-old Borte and agreed to the marriage, leaving the young Temujin behind to serve his new father-in-law, a traditional Mongolian practice. Thus began generations of marital alliances between the Onggirad and the Borjigin ruling house. Such alliances were important not only for the obvious political reasons but also because the early Mongols were extremely exogamous, and having groups such

as the Onggirad suitably distant in terms of kinship to exchange partners with was very important for the long-term partnerships often involved.

To be sure, from the very beginning more than marriage was involved, and other connections developed early. On the way back from betrothing Temujin, Yesugei was poisoned by traditional Tatar enemies and died soon after returning home. After his death Yesugei's family was abandoned by Yesugei's people, the Taiyichiud, and Hoelun-ke (Mother Hoelun), after putting on armor and taking up a spear to stop them, unsuccessfully, was left behind on the pasturelands with her children, a virtual death sentence in old Mongolia. She was soon joined by her other son, Temujin, summoned by his father before he died.

The harrowing adventures of Hoelun and her children subsequently became the stuff of *Secret History* legend but toward the end of this period as things began to improve for Temujin and his family, he went to see Dei Sechen to claim his bride. Given Temujin's decline in status after the death of Yesugei, Dei Sechen could have forgotten about the betrothal and turned his back on the young Temujin but did not choose to do so and sent Borte off to be with her husband, recognizing them as husband and wife. She arrived in his camp accompanied by her mother Chotan, wife of Dei Sechen, along with an important wedding present, a black sable coat.

One alliance reestablished, Temujin now reestablished a second by sending the coat as a gift to Toghriq Ong Khan, a powerful chieftain and once *anda* (sworn brother) of his father. The Ong Khan not only accepted the gift but promised in exchange to help the young Temujin reassemble his dispersed people, a major expression of support for Temujin.

Thus, the connection with Borte and with her father was turned into an even more strategic connection, which Temujin used to restore the position of authority that his father had once enjoyed. The real rise to power for Temujin began from this time, although he remained a minor potentate at best until many years later and was in great personal danger for much of the time from many enemies. These events perhaps took place around 1180, although there is considerable dispute regarding exactly when Temujin was born.

But adversity continued, and this included the capture of the young Borte by Merkit enemies, a revenge act of sorts since Hoelun herself had once been taken in a similar way by Yesugei from these same Merkit. Eventually Temujin recovered Borte with help from the Toghriq Ong Khan and other allies, substantial help if we can believe *The Secret History*, but she came back to him pregnant with the Jochi, a name that means "guest," suggesting illegitimate status, although Temujin never treated him as illegitimate and accepted him fully as his child, but others in the Mongol world certainly did.

Subsequently, with the ups and downs of Temujin's fortunes, relations with the Onggirad were not so firm, and in 1201 Onggirad were among those raising Temujin's former *anda*, Jamuqa, as *gur-khan* (universal khan). Temujin was then still allied with the Toghriq Ong Khan and was able to defeat the threat with his help, but with difficulty, and nearly died in battle thanks to a severe arrow wound. Later after much more struggle, Temujin was able to regain the support of the Onggirad and this time retained it. In 1206, 3,000 Onggirad were among those Mongols participating in the great

reorganization of steppe groups as *mingans* (thousands) in a new Mongol mass army. These same 3,000 Onggirad were apparently those assigned to Muqali's *tanma* for occupied China, organized in 1217 or 1218. They took up position in Manchuria along the Sira Moren, where they remained in the Ming dynasty, becoming a key demographic element of the Eastern Mongols, those Mongols remaining behind in China after 1368. Their descendants are still there.

During the reign of Khubilai Khan and after, Onggirad from this group not only provided brides to the royal family and to other powerful persons in China but also contributed distinguished male supporters to the ruling house in China. These included representatives of Alchi Noyan's lineage. Another key personage connected with Alchi Noyan's family was Chabi Khatun, the Onggirad principal wife of Khubilai Khan, later instrumental in his conversion to Buddhism and also the mother of the crown prince Zhenjin.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Muqali; *Individuals:* Borte; Chabi Khatun; Chinggis Khan; Hoelun; Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Merkit; Tatars; *Key Events:* Yesugei, Death of; *Military:* *Tanma*

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Onggud

The Onggud—the name probably means people of the *wang* (prince), from a title held by the main Onggud ruler—were also called “White” Tatars. The Onggud were a Turkic people living in what is now Inner Mongolia just north and just east of the bend of the Yellow River. Their capital was at Marco Polo's Tenduc, Tiande. In the early 13th century they were largely sedentary, but their direct ancestors were the nomadic Shatuo, one of the dominant groups during the late Tang period and the Chinese Five Dynasties period (907–960) when they founded the Latter Tang (923–935), Latter Jin (936–946), and Latter Han (947–950) dynasties, ruling one after the other in northern China. At that time the ruling family of the Shatuo had the Chinese surname Li, the same as that of the Tang ruling house. They had been awarded that name for merit in assisting Tang rulers to preserve themselves and their dynasty. The Shatuo were one of the numerically smallest groups ever to form a dynasty in China. The elite at least were highly Sinicized.

As early as 1203, the Onggud ruler of Tenduc, Alaqush Digit Quri, holding a mixed Turkic and Khitan title, established good relations with Chinggis Khan, sending a

Turkistanian merchant to present tribute as an intermediary. Later that same year Alaqush Digit Quri rejected the overtures of Chinggis Khan's enemy, Tayang Khan of the Naiman, and informed Chinggis about Tayang's plans. In 1205 the Onggud ruler guided the Mongols during a raid on the Tangut state of Xi Xia. This was their first raid on sedentary northern China. As a consequence, Alaqush Digit Quri was recognized as the chief of 1,000 (*mingan*) in the great reorganization accompanying Chinggis Khan's formal imperial coronation in 1206. Actually, Alaqush's 1,000 were 5,000 of his own people, a substantial force.

At the time, reflecting his close association with the Mongol ruling house, Alaqush was given an imperial princess, Alaqa-beki, Chinggis Khan's youngest daughter, to be his wife. Shortly thereafter in 1207, Alaqush was assassinated by individuals within his own people opposed to his alliance with the Mongols. The assassination was directly instigated by the Jin rulers of northern China. Alaqa-beki was forced to go into hiding with Alaqush's young son and also apparently Alaqush's nephew, Bosipo. Anxious to establish and control Bosipo as the Onggud monarch, the Jin gave him the title Zhen-guo, meaning "fortifier of the dynasty." He refused and went over to Chinggis Khan. Both were apparently rescued by Chinggis Khan in a raid after a harrowing flight past Jin border fortifications.

Alaqush's assassination is associated with a great uprising in Inner Mongolia during that year of the groups called *juyin*. The term—this is the form used in *The Secret History of the Mongols*—is apparently a Khitan word (there is even a Khitan character for writing it, but we are not sure how it is pronounced) for a tribal auxiliary group commanded, as far as we can determine, by a *quri*, as in Alaqush's title. The rest of his title meant "variegated," as a cat, and "digit," a Turkic title. Not all the *juyin* were associated with the Onggud, but apparently enough were. Most if not all were ethnically Khitan, the group that had once ruled the Liao dynasty. It had preceded the Jin as rulers, in their case, of most of the Chinese north, and Khitan survivors had never totally reconciled themselves to Jin rule.

Basically, the ruling Jin attempted to mobilize their *juyin* forces to attack their main enemy, the Song dynasty that ruled the Chinese south, and the *juyin* revolted and went over to the black Tatars, that is, the Mongols. This was a major and somewhat unexpected event and put the Mongols in control of strategic Inner Mongolia, which they would subsequently use to carry out deep raids against both Xi Xia and Jin itself in part because Inner Mongolia then was the site of most Jin frontier defenses, now bypassed by the Mongols. Later the area became the seat of the nomadic garrison force or *tanma* for occupied China, including in its ranks some of the same *juyin* auxiliaries, now serving the Mongols. Other *juyin* troops were responsible for the Mongol capture of the Jin central capital of Zhongdu when they revolted and marched back to the city after the Jin ruler abandoned it and summoned Chinggis Khan's armies.

Rescued, Alaqa-beki subsequently married Bosipo, alias Zhenguo, and after his premature death married Alaqush's young son, her third dynastic marriage. Alaqa-beki then became the de facto ruler of the Onggud and for a time (into the 1230s) one of the most powerful people in northern China. There she led her own army, including female soldiers, in support of Mongol advances, outraging straitlaced Chinese commentators, and

maintained her own special representatives in the regional Mongol capital of Zhongdu, where she shared in the booty, taxes generated in occupied northern China.

Alaqa-beki's children followed her, and by the time of Khubilai Khan's reign Onggud were not only a major ally of the Mongols in China, with which they were extensively intermarried, but also a source of ministers, generals, and courtiers for them. This included one Korghuz, George, taking merely the most famous example. Korghuz held high posts at the end of Khubilai's reign and was known for his cultural interests (he was interested in Confucianism among other things and kept a library in Tenduc). Like many Onggud, Korghuz was a Nestorian Christian, although there were also Muslims found among the Onggud at the time. Among their cultural marks was vini-culture, know to have flourished among the Onggud thanks to a reference by Rashid al-Din.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Juyin; Naiman; Nestorian Christians; Tangut; *Objects and Artifacts:* *The Secret History of the Mongols*; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Zhongdu

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Ortoq

Ortoq (*ortaq*, *ortagh*) is the term for a special commercial partnership that was formed by a contract drawn between an investor and a merchant, most of whom were engaged in long-distance trade during the 10th–14th centuries. This mercantile relation flourished most during the Mongol Empire, when the investors were the ruling Mongols and the merchants were mainly either Buddhist Uyghur or Muslim traders. The Mongol emperors, princes, and government provided the *ortoq* merchants with capital and protection, whereby the *ortoq* merchants became privileged merchant partners of the Mongol elites. Using the Mongols' capital, the *ortoq* merchants conducted long-range trade and money lending throughout the Mongol Empire.

The literal meaning of the Turkish term *ortoq* is "partner" or "companion." Based on this definition, some scholars argued that *ortoq* means a mercantile association or company composed of partner merchants, who were mostly Muslims; they also claimed that *ortoq* was a mercantile practice originating in the Muslim Turkic societies of

western Central Asia and that it was the Muslim Turks who conveyed the commercial institution to the Mongols.

A close reading of historical sources reveals that *ortoq* was neither an association nor a company but simply a commercial partnership made by a contract between individuals—that is, investors and merchants. Moreover, the term *ortoq* was originally derived from the Buddhist Uyghur society of eastern Central Asia, where the term was used to designate co-ownership of land or merchant partnership as early as the 10th century; in this *ortoq* relationship, all of the participants were considered equal. In commerce, the *ortoq* relation was a widespread mercantile practice among the Uyghurs, who dominated long-distance caravan trade during the 10th–13th centuries. According to an *ortoq* contract document, the partner investor and merchant would make an agreement on what and how much merchandise they would deal with, how much money they should earn through their joint enterprise, how they would share profits, and what to do if they failed to obtain the agreed profit.

Since the Uyghurs had an extremely close relationship with the newly emerging Mongol state in political, economic, cultural, and religious aspects, the Uyghurs' mercantile practice of *ortoq* was also adopted by the Mongols, and thus at first the Buddhist Uyghurs were the most outstanding *ortoq* merchants in the early Mongol Empire. At this point, however, the meaning of *ortoq* changed considerably, since the Mongols were the Uyghurs' lords; *ortoq* was no longer a general term indicating equal partnership in long-distance commerce but a specific term for the special mercantile relation between the Mongol elites and their subordinate, but privileged, merchants. As the Mongol Empire expanded westward and consolidated its rule over Muslim territories, Muslim merchants joined the commercial enterprises of the Mongols and eventually outnumbered the Uyghurs among *ortoq* merchants.

Under the Mongol rule, merchants still had to make a contract with their Mongol investors to acquire the status of *ortoq*. By drawing the *ortoq* contract, the Mongol side supplied a certain amount of capital to the merchants, usually in silver, while the merchants were required to pay a predetermined rate of interest on the capital at a designated date. In general, the interest rate was 0.1 percent a year. Moreover, since the *ortoq* relation was formed by a kind of loan contract, there were several regulations to impose penalties on the *ortoq* merchants who failed to meet the conditions of the contract.

From the reign of Chinggis Khan to the regent Oghul Qaimish's time, the conditions were extremely favorable to *ortoq* merchants to the extent that the Mongol government was not expected to obtain direct financial benefit from the *ortoq* relation, because during this period the Mongols always remunerated the merchants too opulently for the goods they brought as a return on the *ortoq* contract despite the fact that they had already conferred capital upon the merchants with an exceptionally low interest rate. Additionally, some Mongol princes issued an excessive amount of promissory notes to *ortoq* merchants, especially when they were lacking money to invest. As a result, by the beginning of Mongke's reign the Mongol government was in debt to the tune of over 500,000 *balishes* of gold and silver to the *ortoq* merchants.

During this period *ortoq* merchants also caused a serious problem in the private sector, especially in northern China, by practicing the notorious usury known as

yang-gao-li (excessively fast-growing interest, such as a sheep giving birth to a lamb every year). After the Mongols introduced a silver tax in northern China, Chinese taxpayers had to depend on *ortoq* merchants, who possessed enough silver to meet the taxpayers' needs, to pay the tax on time. Using this opportunity, the *ortoq* merchants imposed an interest of 100 percent a year on the Chinese. Therefore, most Chinese subjects became severely indebted to the merchants, and this indebtedness consequently undermined the foundation of the tax revenue in the Mongol Empire, whereas the money lending was extremely lucrative to the *ortoq* merchants.

Why did the Mongols continue to support *ortoq* merchants even though their mercantile activities impaired the financial integrity of the empire during the period? The most plausible reason is that the Mongols guaranteed the merchants excessive commercial profit to give them enough incentive to come regularly to the steppe carrying necessities and luxuries produced in the sedentary regions. When the problem became serious to an unbearable degree, however, Mongke Khan finally curtailed the activities of the *ortoq* merchants. First, he decreed that the government cease the excessive remuneration and that the princes stop issuing the promissory notes to *ortoq* merchants. Furthermore, he appointed an official to supervise *ortoq* merchants in 1252. In doing so, he attempted to bring the merchants under the control of the central government. Mongke's policies were continued and strengthened by Khubilai Khan, although later some of the stringent policies lapsed.

Hosung Shim

See also: *Government and Politics: Paiza; Organization and Administration: Taxation; Groups and Organizations: Uyghurs; Objects and Artifacts: Money*

KHUBILAI AND ORTOQS

Mongke's *ortoq* policies were reinforced considerably by Khubilai Khan. Besides prohibiting the excessive reimbursement and the princes' issuing drafts, Khubilai ordered the establishment of the position of supervisorate in chief for *ortoq* merchants in 1267. Then the supervisorate was promoted to the Office of Market Taxes in 1280 to control all *ortoq* merchants in the empire. The main tasks of the supervisorate and the office were, first, to collect capital, mainly in gold and silver, from Mongolian princes; second, to lend out the capital to *ortoq* merchants; third, to collect the agreed-upon interest from the merchants; and finally, to decide whether to renew the partnership contract with the merchants. In addition, the supervisorate supplied the merchants with *paizas* and edicts to facilitate their commercial activities. In doing so, Khubilai succeeded in nationalizing as well as bureaucratizing the commercial practice of *ortoq*. Furthermore, he incorporated the Maritime Trade Supervisorate (Shibosi) into the Office of Market Taxes in 1286, whereby *ortoq* merchants could gain control over the overseas trade linking the South China Sea with the Indian Ocean. Thus, *ortoq* merchants extended their sphere of commercial activity substantially during Khubilai's reign, though they were put under the tight control of the central government.

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Sakya Buddhists

Today the Sakya branch of Tibetan Buddhism is the smallest sect, but during its peak it influenced the world's largest empire. Sakya Buddhism originated in the Sakya monastery in southern Tibet. While its legendary roots are in the eighth century when Buddhism first entered Tibet, the true founder of the sect is Konchog Gyalpo (1034–1102), who established the primary monastery in 1073. The leadership of the sect is hereditary, passing from uncle to nephew, and the monks could marry, thus ensuring the line of leadership.

The key text for the Sakya Buddhists is the *Hevajra Tantra*, which asserts that as the world is bound by lust, liberation or enlightenment can only come through lust.



Sakya Monastery, Tibet. The Sakya Buddhist sect gained a dominant position within the Yuan Empire through the efforts and influence of the Sakya Pandita. (Guenter Guni/iStockphoto.com)

Thus, in sexual relations the male assumes the role of the god Hevajra, who represents skillful means, while the female assumes the role of wisdom embodied in the form of the goddess Nairatmya. This permits the *Hevajra Tantra* to not only be read but also to be acted out.

The primary supplementary and teaching text for the Sakya is found in the *The Path and Its Fruits*, written in the ninth century by the Indian monk Virupa. In *The Path and Its Fruits*, Virupa writes that there is no difference between nirvana and samsara, or the cycle of birth, death, rebirth, and redeath, and thus it was possible to attain enlightenment via samsara.

The Sakya sect became quite prominent during the era of the Mongol Empire. The Mongols' first contact with the sect came with the Mongol invasion of Tibet. Koten, son of Ogodei, whose base of operations was in the former kingdom of Xi Xia, sent an army into Tibet. After sacking two monasteries, Koten received emissaries from the lama preceptor, Sakya Pandita (1182–1251). This gained Tibet a respite, but it was not until 1247 that Koten actually met Sakya Pandita. Under the lama's tutelage, Koten became a Buddhist. Sakya Pandita also sent letters to all of the monasteries in Tibet to submit to the Mongols.

Sakya Pandita did not travel alone. He brought his nephews, the Phagspa Lama and the latter's younger brother Phyagna-Dorje. After Koten's death in 1247 or 1253 (the sources vary), Sakya Pandita remained among the Mongols and was invited by Khubilai in 1251 or 1253 to come to his *ordo*. Before he could receive the invitation, however, Sakya Pandita died. His nephew Phagspa accepted and journeyed to Khubilai's camp. Phagspa soon became Khubilai's spiritual and religious adviser. The Phagspa Lama took part in the religious debates between Buddhists and Mongke that Khubilai presided over. Khubilai's financial and military support also permitted the Sakya Buddhists to dominate most of Tibet.

Khubilai made the Phagspa Lama the state preceptor and head of all Buddhist monks in 1261 as well as Khubilai's personal chaplain. When the Phagspa Lama returned to Tibet in 1264, he assisted in enforcing Mongol rule in Tibet. Having firmly established Mongol rule in Tibet, he planned on returning to Khubilai in 1267. The Phagspa Lama was able to do so, as his brother, Phyagna Dorje, ruled as a secular prince and was married to a Mongol princess. When Phyagna Dorje died in 1267, some Buddhist monks rebelled, forcing the Phagspa Lama to remain. The Phagspa Lama, however, once again restored order with Mongol troops. When he did return, Khubilai tasked him with designing a script that was meant to unify the empire—a script for all languages. The Phagspa Lama presented the script in 1269. Although the so-called Square Script was functional, it never completely replaced any, including Mongolian. Indeed, Phagspa script largely disappeared after the end of the Yuan dynasty.

Although Phagspa retired as imperial preceptor in 1274, his influence was great. A relative took over the post while he returned to Tibet. Phagspa died in 1280, but it was he who initiated the priest-patron relation in the Mongol Empire. In private Khubilai showed Phagspa great respect, but in public it was clear that the great khan was the unquestioned authority. Nonetheless, the Buddhist monk tutored Prince Jingim, Khubilai's chosen successor, and his influence permitted many Tibetans to enter the

Mongol bureaucracy. Without question, the Sakya order became the dominate Buddhist sect within the Mongol Empire

Sakya preeminence in Tibet remained until the 1330s. Afterward the Sakyas still dominated, but fracturing began as the Yuan Empire became less capable of administering its territory. War broke out between Buddhist orders, often supported by rival Mongol princes and commanders. In 1354 the Sakya order lost its position, although Tibet remained part of the Mongol Empire until its collapse.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Dual Government; *Organization and Administration:* Ordo; Writing Systems; *Individuals:* Chabi Khatun; Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* White Lotus Buddhists; *Key Places:* Xi Xia

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Semuren

The term *semu* represented a specific category, one of four the Mongols used to organize the people in China whom they ruled. On its face it is an odd term, often misunderstood because it consists of the two Chinese characters that mean “colored eyes.” In fact, the term *semu* was used earlier in China and meant “various categories” or “various kinds” of people. It was a useful way to group people so the Mongols could maintain their power over their newly acquired subjects. In China this meant using people from Central and Western Asia to rule the conquered Chinese. This was a useful means for the Mongols because there were far too few Mongols to maintain power over a large settled society such as China. Furthermore, most Mongols had no desire to settle down into the life of a bureaucrat. The Mongols first used this term as an administrative category in the late 1220s when they were still securing their hold over northern China. By that time many different nomadic tribes and states in Central Asia and the steppe had submitted to the Mongols, and men of talent from those areas were brought in to northern China to use their skills for their new masters. Who were included in the Semuren category in Mongol China?

One of the most complete descriptions comes from the 14th-century Chinese writer Tao Zongyi, who compiled a list of people whom he knew resided in Mongol China. His list was titled “Clans and Peoples” and was part of his miscellaneous jottings about social conditions of his time. It appears to be the only complete description of members

of the four categories the Mongols created in China. None of the official sources from the period, such as the dynastic history or the legal code, provide this kind of detailed description. Tao identified some 31 separate tribes or people groups as belonging to the category Semuren, and all of them were from some part of Northern or Central Asia. Other sources confirm Tao's impressions that the Mongols grouped people from Central and Western Asia together. This was a natural division in terms of time of submission to the Mongols and in terms of religious persuasion; the people in the Semuren category joined the growing Mongol Empire mainly before anyone living in China and included all types of Muslims.

Of course, it was natural for the Mongols to position their own tribes at the top of this administrative hierarchy, Mongols (Mengguren). Coming just below them were the Semuren. The third group was labeled by the Mongols as the "Chinese" (Hanren) but included all groups living in northern China when the Mongols subdued that area and thus included Jurchen and Khitan as well as ethnic Chinese. Last and ideally with the least amount of real power were people who lived in southern China, called "Southerners" (Nanren). They occupied this lowest rung mainly because their state, the Southern Song, had opposed the Mongols and had only been brought into the imperium after a protracted struggle. They were thus the least trusted by the Mongols, and this ranking system enforced that view across China in terms of excluding southern Chinese from higher offices of power.

This hierarchy reveals a good deal about how the Mongols tried to administer China. The Mongol ruling elite dominated the most powerful positions in the civil, military, and censorial sectors. Since the Semuren personnel were subjects of the Mongols, it was proper that they be ranked below the Mongols in this schema. Yet, at the same time they were also members of the conquering elite, in Chinese eyes on par with the Mongols, true outsiders to China. Semuren were assigned to many of the same high-level government and military jobs as Mongols and also occupied offices just below those at the top of the government reserved for Mongols. The close identification of the Semuren with their Mongol masters is most clearly revealed in the quotas developed for graduates of the Chinese imperial civil service exams once they were restarted; Mongols and Semuren took different, less demanding exams than the Chinese, and equal numbers of Mongols, Semuren, and Chinese were passed and promoted in each exam competition.

As time went on, however, a curious shift occurred among many Semuren: more and more of them adopted the lifestyle, education, and interests of the Chinese scholar-official class, most of whom lived in southern China. For example, many Central Asian people became well educated in the new Confucianism (Neo-Confucianism) that was popular in certain intellectual circles. These scholars participated as equals with famous Chinese who founded private academies in their homes, where they taught select groups of students. Other members of the Semuren group became well known for their skills in composing classical-style poetry that the most refined Chinese appreciated. Even others became renowned for their painting. This was, in hindsight, a natural evolution, since many of the Semuren had come from states or tribes that had long experience in managing settled populations and in brokering international trade before they

submitted to the Mongols. They already spoke several languages, were highly educated, and were already comfortable in a multiethnic, multilingual society, ideally suited to ruling on behalf of the Mongols. We also have to remember that many of those people probably continued to view China and its culture as the apex of the civilized world. So, their adaptation to their new home was not unnatural. These Semuren, with a foot in both the Mongol and Chinese worlds, survived the fall of the Mongols, often assuming positions of power in the new Ming state.

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See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; Uyghurs; *Key Places:* Song Empire

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Sufis

Sufis are Muslim mystics, men and women who seek a higher and more intimate understanding of God through meditation, various ritual practices, and the teachings of past generations of mystic masters. For Sufis, the quest for spiritual enlightenment often takes the form of ecstatic dance, while the divine insights attained are expressed in beautiful verses of poetry. The practices and beliefs of the Sufis helped provide mainstream Muslims with richer and more personal devotional lives but also brought Sufis into conflict with religious and secular authorities.

Most religions have individuals and communities who seek to see past the day-to-day world and gain a more profound understanding and experience of the divine. To do this, they often detach themselves from that which connects people to the world and distracts them from spiritual and metaphysical realities. Mystics typically care little for material wealth, physical pleasures, and even personal relationships. Instead, they follow disciplined routines of worship and meditation, pray and fast or go without sleep, and read texts considered holy by their faith community. All of this is true of Sufis, but what sets them apart from mystics of other religions is that their divine experiences and insights are shared with other Muslims in the form of teaching or public performances. Because of their willingness to share intimate experiences of the divine, Sufis became the victims of persecution and even violence.

The Sufi movement grew out of an earlier ascetic movement in place as early as the late seventh century CE. In Muslim communities, there were certain individuals who

were especially pious and expressed their piety through abstinence from material wealth, fancy food and clothes, and even marriage. It is likely, however, that other monotheistic ascetics, especially Christian monks, provided Muslims with a model of ascetic practice. Whatever the influence of Christians on early Muslim ascetics, there soon developed specifically Muslim forms of asceticism and mysticism, resulting in the formation of what is known as classical Sufism.

Throughout the ninth century the character of Sufism developed, moved along by contributions from various masters. The Baghdad ascetic and mystic Sari al-Saqati, for example, served as a kind of bridge between renunciation (the path of the strict ascetic) and socially involved asceticism and mysticism in which ascetic and mystical insights were expressed in acts of kindness and love toward fellow human beings. Sari aided his neighbors when their sons were arrested, intervened to help a slave girl who broke her master's vase, and took charge of an orphan boy to improve the latter's life.

Meanwhile, the Sufi Dhu al-Nun al-Misri conducted wide-ranging travels and became a master with many disciples in Egypt. For him, a kind of divine personal intuition or interior knowledge was most important for any mystic or ascetic. This contrasted with learning from outside sources or traditions and particularly from the learning of traditionalists. During his travels, Dhu al-Nun was arrested in Baghdad as a heretic. Although he was eventually set free, his experience was all too typical of the conflict between the more conservative elements of Muslim society and the Sufis.



A Sufi man pictured in a landscape, Iran, Isfahan, ca. 1650–1660. Sufis are Muslim mystics who seek a higher and more intimate understanding of God through meditation, various ritual practices, and the teachings of past generations of mystic masters. Due to their syncretic approach, Sufis accelerated the conversion of many Mongols to Islam. (Museum Associates/LACMA)

Abu Yazid al-Bistami, a Persian contemporary of Dhu al-Nun, was the founder of the so-called drunken school of Sufis. The name referred to the ecstatic state its adherents reached as they felt themselves coming nearer to God. Abu Yazid, like Dhu al-Nun, exalted inner knowledge unreceived from any human source but went further. He taught his disciples that the Sufi needed no eyes to see God, no ears to hear him, no brain to think of him, and no tongue to praise him. Instead, devotion should take place within, as aspects of the eventual joining with God, when there would be no distinction between the Sufi and the deity. Then the Sufi would be “annihilated” and his essence joined with that of God.

That doctrine of dissolution led to the arrest and execution of the mystic al-Hallaj at Baghdad in 922. While in an ecstatic state, al-Hallaj proclaimed “Ana al-Haqq” (“I am the Truth,” which may be understood as “I am God”). Just as Abu Yazid taught his disciples that their goal was to annihilate themselves within the essence of God so that only God remained, al-Hallaj’s exultant cry “I am God” meant that he was no more, and only God remained. Instead, his statement was taken as blasphemous, and he was condemned to death.

Later in the 10th century, written statements of Sufi doctrine were produced. That led in the 11th century to an increased tolerance of Sufism and an increased popularity. Preachers carried the messages and insights of Sufism to common Muslims and excited their religious imaginations. Sufis in that period also frequently served as spiritual and moral counselors for mainstream Muslims. In the 12th century, Sufi orders were organized around a single gifted leader. The orders were based on the *tariqa* (path) to enlightenment that the members practiced. Each Sufi order is called a *tariqa*.

Each *tariqa* taught its own form of worship, called *dhikr*, and most taught some form of meditation as well. The theology and cosmology of the *tariqas* could vary. Over time, ceremonial styles of worship within the *tariqas* became very distinct. The Mawlawiyah *tariqa*, for example, was founded by the Sufi master Jalal al-Din al-Rumi in the 13th century. Members of that *tariqa* are best known for their ecstatic dance, during which they constantly spin on the right foot. They are known in the West as whirling dervishes. Many other *tariqas* incorporated dance into their ceremonies, while some encouraged only quiet and individualized meditation. In every *tariqa*, however, individual members were supervised and aided by masters, who guided initiates through a process of spiritual growth and discipline.

The emergence of *tariqas* made the Sufi religion more orderly but did not stifle the Sufi spirit. Muslims who felt attracted to Sufism found it more accessible, and the discipline and regularity of the *tariqas* eased suspicions among traditional Muslims. The *tariqa* movement gave many mainstream Muslims an outlet for their intense religious feelings that was generally acceptable to the religious authorities of the period. The vibrant and spiritually intense religiosity of the Sufis acted as a counterweight to the sometimes grim and legalistic pietists and traditionalists who wielded so much power within medieval Islam.

In Islam, Sufis came to be known as experts on people’s internal lives—movements of the human spirit, emotions, and mind—while legal scholars and Koranic experts, known collectively as the ulema, were responsible for organizing and overseeing the

social and legal behavior of Muslims within Islamic society. The ulema taught Muslims how to obey God's commands, while the Sufis taught Muslims how to love God. The contribution of the Sufis was a richer and more fulfilling inner life for all Muslims.

The increasing popularity of Sufi mystical poetry also helped spread Sufi ideas. The Persian Jalal al-Din in particular helped to popularize this kind of poetry. He wrote mainly of his mystical love and longing and did so in ways that people who were not mystics could understand. In the later Muslim Middle Ages, Persian and Muslim poetry inspired by Sufi sensibility developed in several directions and became one of the most important forms of Islamic literature.

By the end of the Middle Ages, Sufism had developed from a suspect and often persecuted means of religious experience to a central aspect of Islamic religious life. Whereas at its outset Muslim asceticism and mysticism shared much in common with the ascetic and mystical traditions of other religions, Sufism became a specifically Islamic phenomenon, accepted by the mainstream of Islamic society and deeply ingrained in the popular religiosity of ordinary Muslims. Sufism's most important contribution to Islamic society was that it enriched the inner lives of generations of Muslims, allowing them a spiritual warmth that further bound them to the Islamic principles on which Muslim society was structured.

Tom Sizgorich

See also: *Primary Documents:* Document 1

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Tangut

Tangut is a Turkic and Mongolian term for the people of Xi Xia. While the population of that kingdom also included Turks and Chinese, the dominant element were the Tangut, known to the Chinese as Danxiang but more properly known as the Mi-nyag. The Mi-nyag or Tangut originated from the region that encompasses eastern Tibet, Sichuan, and Gansu. During the Tang dynasty (618–907), a sizable body of Mi-nyag migrated to the Ordos and Gansu region. The leading family of these Mi-nyag took the Tang imperial name of Li to honor the Tang dynasty. By 1038, the Tangut had established the empire of Xi Xia (1038–1227).

It is most likely that the named Tangut is derived from this affiliation with the Tang dynasty, the “-ut” being a suffix to make certain nouns plural. Thus, the Tangut were the people of the Tang. When the Mongols began using this term is unclear. It is doubtful

that the Mongols viewed them as the Tang dynasty, but by the 12th and 13th centuries Tangut was a definite ethnonym, although the Mongols at times used Tangut to describe anyone from Xi Xia, whether they were Chinese (Han), Turkic, or Tangut proper.

Culturally, the Tangut developed a complicated writing system that used a script similar to Chinese to write their Tibeto-Burmese language. Numerous books and other pieces have been unearthed by archaeologists, but unfortunately no historical texts have come to light. Thus, we are reliant on outside sources to understand the Tangut. Nonetheless, what has been discovered has shed considerable light on Tangut culture. For instance, many of the texts were printed with movable type. Additionally, many of the texts are Buddhist in nature, supporting what outsiders have stated about the Tangut. The Tangut adopted a variation of Tibetan Buddhism at the onset of the creation of Xi Xia and had numerous Tibetan and Chinese Buddhist texts translated into Tangut. With Buddhism as the state religion, the ruler of Xi Xia was viewed as an incarnate Buddha and also as a dharma lord or Burkhan-khan (Buddha king or holy king).

The Tangut were not confined to the kingdom of Xi Xia, however. Many also lived in the Jin territory and not just land that the Jin seized from Xi Xia. Many served as *juyin*, tribal auxiliaries who protected the Jin frontier. The Tangut were among the first *juyin* to rebel against the Jin and join the Mongols. The tombs of their rulers were richly decorated complexes with pyramid-shaped mounds that are thought to be stupas. While the ruins still exist, the Mongols and later grave robbers stripped much of the adornment.

With the Mongol conquest of Xi Xia in 1209, the Tangut became vassals of Chinggis Khan. Initially, they played their role and sent tribute and participated in the war with the Jin Empire. Eventually, however, they rebelled while Chinggis Khan was destroying the Khwarazmian Empire. Chinggis Khan ended his campaign in Central Asia and then invaded Xi Xia in 1226, destroying all fortifications and slaughtering all who resisted. As a result, most places submitted as soon as the Mongols appeared. Although Chinggis Khan died in the process, the capital of Zhongxing fell after a six-month siege. The Li family was executed along with the population of Zhongxing.

Although popular histories sensationalize the Mongol conquest of Xi Xia by calling it a genocide, the Tangut survived the Mongols. The survivors were clearly more than a handful, as several memorials and stelae from the period of the Mongol Empire use Tangut as a language for inscriptions. This demonstrated that a substantial audience existed and that the Mongols wished to communicate to even as late as 1340, as evidenced in inscriptions at the Juyongguan Pass that connected northern China to what is Inner Mongolia. Many Tangut entered Mongol service even prior to the destruction of Xi Xia. One such Tangut was Chaghan, who participated as a commander of Mongol armies involved in the reduction of Zhongxing. Some attribute the survival of the Tangut to his loyalty to Chinggis Khan. Other Tangut also played a role in the expansion and diversification of the Mongol Empire, particularly in the transmission of Tibetan Buddhism to the Mongols. During the Yuan Empire the Tangut were classified as Semuren, which provided them with a higher social status.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration: Yuan Empire; Groups and Organizations: Semuren; Key Places: Jin Empire; Khwarazmian Empire; Xi Xia*

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Tatars

The term "Tatar" can be confusing. In the medieval period, sedentary sources frequently used it to refer to all nomads from the Mongolian steppes. The Mongolian nomads themselves used it for a nomadic group in eastern Mongolia. Later the term was used to refer to all of the nomads who occupied the region that once comprised the Golden Horde. The term "Tatar" had been in use since the eighth century and appeared in ancient Turkic inscriptions and is mentioned not only in the Chinese sources but also in Islamic histories as well. While the sources were often uncertain of their origin, they did, however, recognize that the Tatars were not a Turkic people. Technically, the Tatars were a Mongolian-speaking tribal confederation that was separate from the medieval Mongol tribal system. They nomadized in the eastern steppes of Mongolia to the Greater Khinggan Mountain range.

During the period of the Jin Empire (1125–1234), the Tatars acknowledged the sovereignty of the Jin emperor and served as *juyin* (auxiliaries) who guarded the frontier of the Jin Empire. They proved to be of particular value against the nascent Mongol power that emerged in the mid-12th century and played a large part in the fracturing of Mongol power during that era. In return for their service to the Jin, they received access to border markets and more luxury goods. In addition to keeping the Mongols at bay, the Tatars had frequent clashes with the Kereit, who were an emerging power in central Mongolia.

While the Jin had concerns about the Mongols, the Tatars also had good reason to attack them. A Tatar shaman was killed by an Onggirad when the shaman failed to cure their ailing leader. When the Tatars attacked the Onggirad, the Mongols sided with the Onggirad. As a result a long-lasting feud began, one that eventually transcended normal protocols of the steppes. The Mongol leader Ambaghai was captured while escorting his daughter to be married to a Tatar. This was normally a peaceful event. The Tatars, however, took Ambaghai prisoner and sent him to the Jin Empire, where he was

executed by being nailed to a wooden donkey. The donkey instead of a horse was used to humiliate the proud Mongol leader, as donkeys were not ridden by pastoral nomads. The death of Yesugei also violated normal protocol, in which guests to a camp were shown the utmost hospitality regardless of enmity. The murder of Yesugei can be understood, as he had defeated the Tatars on several occasions, but the violation of hospitality protocol was a serious offense that threatened the very fabric of steppe social convention.

These were the two underlying reasons for Chinggis Khan's wars against the Tatars. His success was also due to a change in Jin policy. The Tatars could afford to violate social conventions while the Jin supported the Tatars. In the 1190s, however, the Jin ceased their support of the Tatars, as the latter had become too powerful. A Tatar leader known as Me'ujin Se'ultu had unified the Tatars. In 1196 the Jin recruited the Kereit and the Mongols, led by Temujin (Chinggis Khan), to attack the Tatars. With Me'ujin Se'ultu's death, the unified Tatar confederation fractured again. Nonetheless, the Tatars remained a powerful entity, albeit less threatening to the Jin Empire. Chinggis Khan finally defeated them in 1202. According to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, all Tatars taller than the linchpin of a cart wheel were to be executed. The captured Tatars rebelled but were subdued and killed.

Considering that tribal identity was based on the leadership of a tribe, the mass execution most likely did not include all Tatars. The height requirement excluded very young children, but the aristocracy of the Tatars were eliminated. The nonaristocratic Tatars, however, were not killed, but the Tatars were eliminated as a corporate entity. Accusations of a genocide are once again overstated. Several Tatars remained, and some became high-ranking officials in the Mongol Empire such as Shiq Qutuqu, who was adopted into Chinggis Khan's family and became the first *yeke jarquchi* (chief judge) of the Mongol Empire. Chinggis Khan also had two Tatar wives, Yisui and Yisulun, who were sisters.

Nonetheless, because of the prevalence of the Tatar ethnonym prior to the rise of the Mongols, Chinese and Islamic sources used the term "Tatar" (undoubtedly to the chagrin of Chinggis Khan) as a synonym for the Mongols. Eventually, the use of "Tatar" diminished within the Mongol Empire, but observers on the fringes of the Mongol Empire continued its use. With the dissolution of the Golden Horde into several states, the Rus' sources referred to all of them as Tatars, perhaps using the old ethnonym but perhaps in derision. It may have also been a reflection of the new identity of those states. The Mongol element was minimal, as had been the case in the Golden Horde from the beginning, but now these were a Muslim and Turkicized people. The Tatars still exist in Russia, Ukraine, and many other parts of the former Soviet Union.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Shamanism; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Tribe:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kereit; Onggirad; *Key Events:* Tatar Yoke; Yesugei, Death of; *Key Places:* Jin Empire

FROM TATAR TO TARTARS AND STEAK TATAR

In many European sources, the Mongols weren't referred to as Tatars but rather as Tartars. Little was known about the Mongols in Western Europe before the mission of John of Plano Carpini and the mission of William of Rubruck. The term "Mongol" was unknown, and because of minimal contact with the steppes, the term "Tatar" was only known to a few. The word, however, was similar to another well-known word, Tartarus, the Greek word for Hell, derived from Greek mythology.

The Mongol invasion of Europe was attributed as punishment for the collective sins of Christendom. The strange and savage appearance of the Mongols only reinforced this idea. The amount of destruction also exceeded all expectations. As a result, rather than Tatars, the Mongols were viewed as Tartars, or denizens from Hell. The name stuck even as West Europeans became better informed. Even in the 19th century, explorers and some maps referred to the steppes of modern-day Kazakhstan and Mongolia as Tartary.

It is from this Tartar reference that the food known as steak tartar comes. It was said that the Mongols tenderized cuts of meat by placing them under their saddles and letting the horses' sweat season it. They then ate it raw. This was most likely a rumor created to demonstrate the Mongols' barbarous behavior, as non-Western sources do not mention this custom. It is likely, however, that the Mongols did place meat under their saddles as a treatment for saddle sores on a horse's back, as they believed that blood had healing properties.

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Uyghurs

The people known in the Mongol Empire sources as Uyghurs were originally part of a larger group with a common cultural heritage as equestrian nomads known as Turks. These people formed their own nomadic empire in the steppe in 552. The Turk khanate, in addition to nomadic elements, had been considerably influenced by their Iranian neighbors, and elements of the Turk confederation developed an interest in commerce and the settled life. This was especially true of the tribe that eventually became known as the Uyghurs.

The Uyghur tribe was initially the first of a confederation of nine Turkic tribes known as the Toquz Oghuz and was especially influenced by Sogdian traders who plied the ancient east-west trade routes. Uyghurs also frequently entered into alliances with the

Chinese to their south, usually to counter the power of other Turk tribesmen over them. They eventually led a rebellion against the Turk ruler and established their own state in 744 that was based in the central Mongolian steppe area but also controlled areas south and west across eastern Central Asia (into the area known today as Xinjiang). This enterprise was most notable for the fact that the Uyghurs centered their state around a capital city called Karabalghasun that they built on the Orkhon River in the steppe. Their long interests in international trade, urban life, and the state of China were soon put to the test when the Chinese Tang state was threatened by the rebellion of one of its own generals in 755. The Tang court called on the Uyghurs for help because the Uyghurs, while mainly settled into city life, had maintained their skills in cavalry warfare. In return for supplying the military power necessary to crush the rebels, the Uyghurs were allowed to stay in central China, where they pillaged several Chinese cities, including the Tang capital.

It was at that time that the Uyghur king converted to Manichaeism, the dualistic religion of the Persian Sogdians, who lived mainly in the area around Bukhara and Samar-



A Uyghur prince with attendants, painting from the Mogao Caves, Dunhuang, present-day China, ninth century. Although by the 13th century the Uyghurs were no longer a major power, they exerted a profound influence on the Mongols who even modified the Uyghur script for their own use. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

kand in Central Asia and who specialized in brokering trade along the overland trade routes there. They became more and more influential at the Uyghur court, which led to disputes among the Uyghur elite that eventually weakened the power of the Uyghur ruling elite. For example, the people who lived in the city Beiting on the northern slopes of the Tianshan Mountains in the northern Tarim Basin area became disenchanted with Uyghur rule and switched their allegiance to the Tibetans in 789. The next 40 years saw increasing friction with the Tibetans to their south and Kirgiz tribes to their north, and the Uyghur tribal union broke up in 840, with various groups fleeing south in three different directions. One of the largest contingents of Uyghur diaspora fled southeast to the Tarim Basin area that they had earlier controlled. They established a new state centered around the oasis cities Beiting and Gaochang, known to the Uyghurs as Beshbaliq and Qocho, respectively. Scholars often refer to the state as Uyghurstan.

The local population of the Tarim Basin was mainly Iranian or Tocharian, not nomads but rather sedentary agriculturalists. The influx of the Uyghur diaspora in the late ninth century displaced the Tibetans, and the local population became increasingly Turkicized and more involved in mercantile and commercial activities. This new Uyghur state was known to the Chinese as the Gaochang Uyghur kingdom and maintained good relations with most of its neighbors except for the Muslim Karakhanids to the west, in present-day Uzbekistan. In the 1130s the Uyghur king submitted to a new state that was established in the mountainous area at the far western end of the Tarim Basin by a group of nomadic Khitan, whose state was known as the Kara Khitai. The Uyghurs preferred a negotiated settlement to war. That vassal relationship, at first very light, became increasingly onerous on the Uyghurs so that by the time the newly titled Chinggis Khan emerged as leader of the Mongol confederation in 1206, the Uyghurs were looking for a way out. That opportunity arose in 1209 when the Uyghur king had the Kara Khitai overseer at his capital of Gaochang assassinated and then immediately swore loyalty and submission to the Mongols.

The early voluntary submission of the Uyghurs and their state to Chinggis was a politically astute move, since it marked them as particularly loyal and valued assets in the new Mongol imperial project. Chinggis gave one of his daughters in marriage to the Uyghur king, and the king and his descendants were allowed to remain at Gaochang as leaders of the Uyghur people until Khubilai lost control of the area to Qaidu and the Chagatai Khanate decades later. Uyghur tribesmen immediately proved valuable to Mongol military campaigns in Central Asia. And many of the Uyghur aristocracy were quickly taken up by the Mongols to manage newly conquered peoples and areas on behalf of the Mongols. This was because the Uyghurs had a reputation as skilled administrators of a diverse population back in their homeland. The high esteem in which the Mongols held them was also due to the fact that Chinggis adopted Uyghur writing to represent spoken Mongolian two years before he was elected as grand khan. This reputation as savvy literate men continued to color the lives of Uyghurs who were moved into China to work for the Mongols, and they became first among equals in the large group of Semuren foreigners.

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See also: *Groups and Organizations:* Nestorian Christians; Sakya Buddhists; Semuren; White Lotus Buddhists; *Key Places:* Kara Khitai; Uyghuristan

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Uzbeks

The Uzbeks are an ethnic group in Central Asia found chiefly in Uzbekistan but also in other Central Asian states and in Afghanistan. The Uzbeks speak either of two dialects of Uzbek, a language belonging to the Turkic group. More than 16 million Uzbeks live in Uzbekistan, 2 million live in Afghanistan, 1.4 million live in Tajikistan, 570,000 live in Kyrgyzstan, and smaller numbers live in Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Sinkiang in China. The great majority of Uzbeks are Sunni Muslims.

The name Uzbek emerged in the early 14th century in the area known as the Golden Horde (mainly European Russia) as a political term meaning Khan Uzbek's subjects, irrespective of their ethnic origins. A century later after the Golden Horde had collapsed, Khan Abulkhair united the territory between the Ural and Irtysh Rivers and created a new empire under his rule. Its nomadic inhabitants, although divided into numerous tribes, had a single Turkic language and a specific culture.

Not all the traditional chiefs were able to resign themselves to Abulkhair's despotism. Some of them migrated southward to the Chuh River, where they founded new settle-

ments. In this region, the common name for exiles and runaways was *kazakhs* (free horsemen).

After Abulkhair's death in 1468, the exiles, led by Girei and Janibek, came back to participate in the war of his succession. Aided by the common hatred of the late khan and his supporters, they emerged victorious. Girei became khan, and Janibek was appointed his coruler. The former exiles who returned to their homeland and came to power called themselves Kazakhs. Gradually, all the population of the khanate adopted the name.

Meanwhile, Abulkhair's descendants dreamed of revenge. Abulkhair's grandson, Muhammad Shaybani, became leader of all tribes and clans dissatisfied with the new rule. He gathered a great army and achieved victory at Bukhara and Samarkand. Here, Shaybani founded a new empire that was called Uzbek and did not include the northern (Kazakh) territories.



Muhammad Shaybani, Khan of the Uzbeks (1500–1510), seated in a yurt, or *ger*. The descendant of one of Jochi's heirs, the Uzbek Khanate emerged from the ruins of the Golden Horde and established dominance in much of the former Chaghatayid Khanate. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

While Shaybani was occupied with the war with the Kazakhs, a new threat to his rule came from Iran. In 1510 Ismail, founder of the Safavid dynasty, unexpectedly crossed the Uzbek frontier and won an easy victory. Shaybani was surrounded in the fortress of Maryh (Merv); he failed to break through the siege and was killed in battle. All territory of the former empire was peacefully divided between Ismail and a few others. Under the new masters, however, the invaded territory completely disintegrated. In a few years, all of them lost power. The epoch of local rulers (amirs) began for Central Asia.

Since that time, the term “Uzbek” has become an ethnic name for all the Turkic population of the former Shaybani state, which consisted of two main groups: the former Kazakhs, who had come with Shaybani, and the Chagatais, who included the native Turkic population and those whose ancestors had come with the Mongols.

In the 17th century, Uzbek territory was divided among three states: the Manghyt tribe came to power in Bukhara, the Kungrats founded their dynasty in Khiva, and the Ming dynasty took power in Kokand. In the late 19th century, these states were included in the Russian sphere of influence: Bukhara became a Russian protectorate in 1868, followed by Khiva in 1873, and Kokand was officially annexed by the Russian Empire in 1876 and renamed the Fergana region.

At the turn of the 20th century, a secular intelligentsia emerged in the region. Its representatives, inspired by Russian and West European liberalism, advocated Pan-Turkic identity. By 1921, however, this movement had been suppressed, and the communists held power in Kokand, Bukhara, and Khiva. In 1924, the three former states were reunited as Uzbekistan. The formerly Kazakh territory known as Karakalpakstan was incorporated as an autonomous region into Uzbekistan in 1936.

Uzbek national identity is mostly a product of the Soviet period. In 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Uzbek republic proclaimed its independence.

Alexei Pimenov

See also: *Organization and Administration: Golden Horde*

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White Lotus Buddhists

The White Lotus school of Buddhism used traditional Chinese concepts of the universe. Whereas other forms of Buddhism emphasized that the world was an illusion, the White Lotus (and other Tiandai schools) taught that the Buddha was present in every aspect of the world. The White Lotus came into being in the mid-sixth century under the patriarch Huiwen, who taught the Three Truths:

1. The Void—the doctrine of interdependent origination.
2. Impermanence—that all things are temporary.
3. The Mean—the realization that emptiness and impermanence are dual aspects or reality that will lead to a true understanding. (Morgan 2010)

The second patriarch, Huisi (515–576), was an ascetic who meditated in the Tiandai Mountains, where he established his monastery. The name of the sect comes from this experience. Tiandai refers to the location of the monastery, and White Lotus comes from his meditations in which he envisioned himself sitting on a giant lotus flower. The name may have also referred to the Lotus Sutra, which the sect viewed as the most important religious text.

The true founder of the school, however, was the third patriarch, Zhiyi (538–597). He attempted to sort through the contradictions found in various Buddhist texts and explain them for a more coherent understanding. Through his studies, he determined that the Lotus Sutra was the most important and best represented the dharma. Furthermore, he determined that enlightenment was a universal possibility and not something that could only be achieved through asceticism or being a monk. Furthermore, Zhiyi developed a special form of meditation, known as *zhiguan*, that sought to calm the restive mind. It is still used today. The second also emphasized the veneration of the Amida Buddha, who could help believers obtain the Pure Land paradise—a heavenly place—until they were ready to move on to nirvana.

It is notable that the first three patriarchs lived during the Six Dynasties period (220–589). This was not only the period when Buddhism first appeared in China but also a period of disunity and conflict. Undoubtedly the White Lotus's concern for the present and its path to enlightenment made it appealing in a time of turmoil, which also explains its popularity during the late Yuan period.

While numerous other Buddhist sects existed in the Song Empire, the White Lotus sect began a surge in popularity, which then carried over during the Yuan period. One reason why Khubilai gave the White Lotus school patronage was due to his own suspicions of wealth of the Chan (Zen) monasteries.

Although the Red Turbans' millenarian view is often portrayed as a militant outgrowth of the White Lotus sect, the White Lotus sect espoused a much more varied outlook. Furthermore, the White Lotus Buddhists consisted of more than the dispossessed farmers and refugees who constituted the majority of the early Red Turban movement. Indeed, it is clear that not all White Lotus Buddhists agreed with the Red Turbans' message or methods. Considering the varied membership, this is not surprising.

The White Lotus sect included believers not only among the poor and dispossessed but also among the Chinese intellectuals and literati, Mongol nobles. Furthermore, it was not a secret society but had temples across China where several figures in Buddhism were venerated. The Maitreya Buddha, or the Buddha yet to come, was among the most important. The Maitreya Buddha is a messianic figure who will alleviate the pain and suffering of all. In times of distress, the veneration of the Maitreya Buddha was exceedingly important. Yet the White Lotus sect also venerated the Amida Buddha, who could ameliorate conditions in the present.

Not only were several Mongol elites members of the White Lotus sect, but the Yuan government offered patronage to it. Its relationship with the White Lotus sect was not always perfect. As rivalry existed between those who preferred Tibetan forms of Buddhism over Chinese variants, there were those within the government who looked askance at White Lotus Buddhists. This was further complicated by those within the court who wished to assert a more Mongol cultural influence over the court with those who embraced aspects of Chinese society and culture. During the anti-Chinese phases, the government's stance toward the White Lotus sect shifted and led to the banning of some of its factions, particularly in 1325 and 1337 when the military was called in to suppress these factions' more violent tendencies and those who emphasized the millenarian aspects of the sect. These groups also tended to be involved in subversive underground activities that sought to hasten an apocalyptic scenario to bring about the arrival of the Maitreya Buddha. Some temples were also razed, but this was far from an outright persecution of White Lotus Buddhism, as members of the government openly continued patronage of the White Lotus sect.

This was largely because the subversive millenarian White Lotus factions appeared as a fringe group. Meanwhile, other White Lotus members actively sought to enforce orthodoxy among its adherents. Their actions, however, were largely futile.

While the White Lotus sect survived the collapse of the Yuan Empire, it found itself under persecution during the Ming dynasty. Even though the Red Turbans had affiliations with the White Lotus sect, Zhu Yuanzhang, a former Red Turban rebel and the founder of the Ming dynasty, viewed it as heterodox and persecuted it. This was part of his effort to bring religion under the control of the state—perhaps realizing the role that religion played in supporting rebels against the Yuan. Soon “White Lotus” became a derogatory term for any group that deviated from Ming religious policy.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration: Yuan Empire; Groups and Organizations: Sakya Buddhists; Key Events: Red Turban Revolt*

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INDEX

Bold indicates volume numbers.

- Abaoji (r. 907–927), **1**:217–218
- Abaqa (r. 1265–1282)
- Clement (Pope) and, **1**:126
 - consolidating il-khan rule, **1**:125
 - cultural exchange, **1**:125
 - death of, **1**:126
 - engagement with Europe, **1**:125–126
 - family of, **1**:124
 - Hethum, King of Cilicia, and, **2**:21–22
 - invasions of his realm, **1**:125
 - Jaime I of Aragon and, **1**:126
 - Khubilai Khan and, **1**:125
 - Khurasan and, **1**:82
 - Majd al-Mulk, **1**:125
 - overview of, **1**:124–126
 - Transcaucasus fighting, **1**:124
 - as viceroy of Khurasan, **1**:124
- Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258)
- Abbasid Revolution, **2**:165
 - the Abbasids, **2**:165
 - Baghdad, creation of, **2**:165
 - Baghdad, siege of (1258), **2**:166
 - Buyid (934–1062) family and, **2**:166
 - Caliph al-Mustaʿsim, **2**:166
 - Caliph al-Nasir (r. 1180–1225), **2**:166
 - Caliph al-Qaʿim (1031–1075), **2**:166, 167
 - Chormaqan, **2**:166
 - Mongol destruction of, **2**:164
 - naming of, **2**:164
 - Otrar Massacre (1218), **2**:166
 - overview of, **2**:164–167
 - photograph of the ribat in Monastir, Tunisia, **2**:165
 - Prophet Muhammad (d. 632), **2**:164
 - Seljuk Turks of Rum, **2**:166
 - Shia Muslims and, **2**:165
 - Sunni Muslims and, **2**:164
 - temporal authority of, **2**:164, 165–166
 - Umayyad Caliphate and, **2**:165
 - unexpected alliance, **2**:167
- ʿAbd Allah, **2**:56
- Abu Said (r. 1317–1335)
- Amir Chuban, **1**:126
 - Chuban and, **1**:127, 128, 144–145
 - conversion to Islam, **2**:34
 - death of, **1**:128
 - Dimashq, execution of, **1**:144
 - Golden Horde, **1**:127
 - Il-Khanate, disintegration of, **1**:122, 128
 - Il-Khanate and, **1**:122
 - Il-Khanate golden age, **1**:126
 - illustration of, **1**:127
 - invasion by Uzbek Khan, **1**:127
 - Mamluks, **1**:127–128
 - marriage of, **1**:128, 145
 - overview of, **1**:126–129
 - portrayal of, **1**:128
 - Rashid al-Din, execution of, **1**:126
- Abu Yazid al-Bistami, **1**:246
- Abulkhair Khan, **1**:254
- Adai, **1**:27
- Aguda (1068–1123), **1**:219, **2**:176
- Ahmad Teguder (r. 1282–1284), **2**:33
- Aizong Wanyan Shouxu, **1**:213
- Alaʿ al-Din Muhammad II (d. 1220), **2**:35, 37
- Alan Goa and the arrow parable

- Alan Goa, 1:104, 2:1
 as foundational, 2:4
 hierarchy of tribes, 2:5–6
 Niru'un, Durlukin, and social structure, 2:6
 overview of, 2:4–6
 reactments of, 2:6
 story of, 2:4–5
 uses of, 2:6
- Alans (Asud)
 alliances of, 1:197
 alternative name for, 1:197
 capital of, 1:197
 Catholicism and, 1:198
 Caucasian Alans, 1:198
 deportation of, 1:198
 Hunnic expansion and, 1:197
 influence of, 1:198
 location of, 1:197
 Mongol defeat of, 1:197–198, 2:96
 Mongol first encounter with, 1:197
 name change, 1:198
 Nayan's Rebellion and, 1:198
 during the Northern Yuan period, 1:198
 Ossetians, 1:198–199
 overview of, 1:194, 197–199
 as a valued asset, 1:198
- Alaqa-beki, 1:236, 237
- Alaqush Digt Quri, 1:235–236
- Ala-ud-Din Khalji, 2:175
- Alba qubchiri*, 1:100
- Aleksandr (Alexander), Prince (1221–1263),
 2:97, 228
- Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263)
 battle on the ice, 1:67
 campaigns against the Chud', 1:65
 collection of the *tamgha* (customs duties),
 1:66
 crusades in the Baltic and, 1:65–66
 fresco of, 1:65
 at Lake Peipus in April 1242, 1:66
 loyalty to the Mongols, 1:65
 Mongol invasion of the Rus' principalities,
 1:65
 Novgorod and, 1:64, 65
 overview of, 1:64–67
 as prince of Vladimir, 1:66
 resistance to the census, 1:66
 as a Russian hero, 1:65
- Sartaq (r. 1256–1257), 1:66
 submission to the Mongols, 1:64, 65, 66
 as a symbol of Soviet resistance, 1:67
 Teutonic Knights and, 1:67, 66
- Alexius I Comnenus, 2:168
- Alghu of the Chagatai Khanate
 Ariq Boke and, 1:20, 21, 23, 180
 in Central Asia, 1:177
 demise of, 1:86, 181
 Orghina marriage, 1:71, 177
 Qaidu and, 1:86
- Alginchin*
 Bodonchar and, 2:65
 conception of, 2:65
 definition of, 2:64, 112
 importance of, 2:65
manglai and *gejige*, 2:66
 Muqali and, 2:65
 overview of, 2:64–66
tanmachin, 2:66
- Alice of Jerusalem, 2:170–171, 173
- Almaliq, 1:2
- Al-Salih Ayyubi (r. 1240–1249), 1:223, 2:191
- Altan Khan of the Tumed, 1:28
- Altan Khatun (fl. 1220–1245), 2:85
- Altan Orda, 1:73
- Altan Urugh and the Chinggisid Principle,
 2:15
- Altan Urugh (Golden Family), 1:8
- Ambaghai, 1:249–250
- Amidha Buddha, 1:256
- Amir Chuban, 1:126
- Amiranshah, 1:41
- Amir-ordo*, 1:93
- Anatolia, 2:99
- Anda* bond/relationship, 2:59
- Anderson, Eugene, 2:12
- Andreevich, Vladimir, 2:30
- Andronicus II Palaeologus (r. 1282–1328), 2:42
- Animal products, 2:122
- Ankara, Battle of (1402)
 Bayezid I, 2:67
 description of, 2:67
 Mehmet I, 2:67
 overview of, 2:67–68
 precipitating events, 2:67
 Timur (Tamerlane), 2:67
 water supply, 2:67

- Anquan (r. 1206–1211), 2:206
- Antioch, Principality of
- Alice of Jerusalem, 2:173, 170–171
 - Assizes of Antioch*, 2:168
 - Baldwin I, 2:168
 - Baldwin II, 2:169, 170, 171
 - Baldwin III, 2:172
 - Battle of Ager Sanguinis (Field of Blood), 2:170
 - Baybars I conquest of, 2:174
 - Bernard of Valence, 2:168
 - Bohemond I of Taranto, 2:168, 169
 - Bohemond II, 2:170
 - Bohemond III, 2:172
 - Bohemond IV, 2:173
 - Bohemond V, 2:174
 - Bohemond VII, 2:174
 - Bursuq ibn Bursuq of Hamadan, 2:170
 - capital city of, 2:168
 - as a commercial center, 2:168
 - Constance, 2:171, 172
 - Constantine of Lampron, 2:173
 - Daimbert of Jerusalem, 2:168
 - dates of, 2:167
 - establishment of, 2:167
 - First Crusade and, 2:167, 168
 - founders of, 2:168
 - Frankish state, 2:167, 168
 - Frederick I Barbarossa, 2:172
 - Frederick II, 2:173
 - Fulk, 2:170
 - Henry of Champagne, 2:173
 - Hetum of Cilicia., 2:174
 - Hospitaller castle of Margat, 2:174
 - Ilghazi of Mardin, 2:170
 - Innocent III (Pope), 2:173
 - John II Comnenus, 2:171
 - Joscelin II of Edessa, 2:171
 - Knights Hospitaller, 2:172, 173
 - Knights Templar, 2:173
 - Laodikeia, 2:169, 172, 174
 - Leon II of Cilicia, 2:173
 - Les Chetifs*, 2:171
 - location of, 2:168
 - Lombard expedition in the Crusade of 1101, 2:169
 - Manuel I Comnenus, 2:171, 172
 - Maurice of Porto, 2:169
 - Nur al-Din, 2:171, 172
 - overview of, 2:167–174
 - Philip of Antioch, 2:173
 - Ralph of Dom-front, 2:170
 - Raymond III, 2:173
 - Raymond of Antioch, 2:173
 - Raymond of Poitiers, 2:170, 171
 - Raymond-Rupen, 2:173
 - Reynald of Châtillon, 2:171, 172
 - Riwan of Aleppo, 2:169
 - Roger of Antioch, 2:169–170
 - Saladin, 2:172
 - siege of the city of Antioch (1097–1098), 2:168
 - Tancred of Lecce, 2:168, 169
 - Treaty of Devol, 2:169
- Antung (1245–1293), 2:113
- Anushtigin Gharchai, 2:181
- Aq Qoyunlus and the Safavids, 2:78
- Archery, 2:111
- Arghun (r. 1284–1291)
- Oljeitu and, 1:174
 - Sa'd al-Dawla and, 1:210
 - town of Sultaniyya and, 1:39
- Arghun Aqa, 1:7, 42, 232
- Ariq Boke
- Alghu and, 1:20, 71
 - Berke and, 1:22
 - civil war, 1:3, 115, 168
 - Khubilai Khan and, 1:20, 21, 71
 - overview of, 1:xix
- Armenian account of the Mongol's divine right to rule (early 14th century), 2:253–254
- Armor
- boiled leather, 2:69
 - chain mail, 2:68
 - coats, 2:68
 - deel* or *degel*, 2:68
 - helmets, 2:69
 - image of, 2:69
 - John of Plano Carpini's description of the Mongol armor (1240s), 2:226–227
 - lamellar armor, 2:68
 - overview of, 2:68–70
 - silk shirts, 2:69–70
- Arslan Atsiz Khwarazmshah (r. 1127–1156), 2:182

- Arugtai of the Asud, 1:27
- Assassins (1090–1256 CE)
- Ala al-Din, 2:252
 - assassin, the term, 1:199
 - assassination of Nizam al-Mulk, 1:200–201
 - Castle Masyaf in Syria (image of), 1:200
 - Ch'ang Te's description of the Assassins (1250s), 2:232–233
 - deep cover, 1:201
 - drug use, 1:199, 201
 - fame of, 1:199
 - goal of, 1:199
 - Hasan Sabbah (d. 1124) and, 1:200–201
 - hashish and, 1:199
 - Hulegu and, 1:155
 - Marco Polo's account of (ca. 1300), 2:252–253
 - Nizari Ismailis, 1:155, 199, 200, 201
 - Old Man of the Mountain, 1:199, 200
 - Old Man of the Mountain's fortress, 1:199
 - overview of, 1:194, 199–202
 - secret identities, 1:201
 - Sinan (d. 1192) and, 1:200, 201
 - in Syria, 1:200
 - work of, 1:201
- Asutai, 1:168
- Atsiz, 2:180, 182
- Atwood, Christopher P., 1:78, 2:152
- Avars (558–796), 2:184
- Ayn Jalut, Battle of (1260)
- description of, 2:71
 - location of, 2:70
 - Mamluks victory, factors influencing, 2:71
 - overview of, 2:70–72
 - precipitating events, 2:70
 - Qutuz, 2:70
 - significance of, 2:71–72
 - strength of forces, 2:70
 - Syria *tumen*, 2:70–71
- Ayushiridara, 1:26, 50
- Baba Isaq (1240/1241), 2:199
- Baba Tukles converts the Khan, 1:54
- Babur (1483–1530), 1:89
- Baghdad, creation of, 2:165
- Baghdad, siege of (1258)
- Caliph al-Musta'sim, 2:72, 166
 - depiction of, 2:73, 106
 - description of, 2:73–74
 - Hulegu and, 2:72–74
 - Ibn Alqami and, 2:72–74
 - overview of, 2:63, 72–75
 - pillaging of, 2:74
 - precipitating events, 2:72–74
- Baghdad Khatun, 1:145
- Bahriyya, 2:191
- Baidar and Orda, 2:18, 19, 100, 101
- Baiju (d. 1260)
- administration of Anatolia, 1:68
 - administration of Rum, 1:68
 - administration of Tabriz, 1:42
 - administration of the Middle East, 1:68
 - Altan Khatun and, 1:68, 2:85
 - attitude to Islam, 1:68
 - Baghdad, siege of (1258), 1:68–69, 2:74
 - campaigns against the Abbasid Caliphate, 1:68
 - envoy from Pope Innocent IV, 1:68
 - Hulegu and, 1:68–69
 - lineage of, 1:67
 - overview of, 1:67–69
 - as a replacement to Chormaqan, 1:68, 2:98
 - Seljuk and, 1:63, 68, 2:98
 - Tabriz, 1:42
- Baldwin I (of Boulogne), 2:168
- Baldwin II, 2:169, 170, 171
- Baldwin III, 2:172
- Baljuna Covenant (1203)
- definition of, 2:6
 - Jochi Qasar, 2:7
 - at Lake Baljuna, 2:7, 8
 - overview of, 2:6–8
 - Temujin, 2:6–8
 - truth of, 2:7
 - Uyghur Chinqai, 2:7
- Bar Hebraeus (1226–1286), 2:235
- Baraq
- Mubarak Shah and, 2:33
 - overview of, 1:72
 - Peace of Qatwan (1267), 2:37–39
 - Qaidu defeat of, 1:181
 - Samarkand, plunder of, 1:181
- Bartholomew of Cremona, 2:56
- Battle
- of Ager Sanguinis (Field of Blood), 2:170
 - of Ankara, 2:67–68

- of Ayn Jalut, 2:64, 70–72, 174
- of Chakirmaut, 1:141, 226, 227, 228, 2:79–81
- of Hattin, 2:172
- of the Irtysh River, 1:183, 227, 228, 2:89–91
- of the Kalka River, 2:62, 95–97
- of Kediri, 1:165
- of Khujand, 2:180
- of Kose Dagħ (1243), 2:62, 97–99
- of Kulikovo Pole, 2:4, 29–32, 50
- of La Forbie, 1:223
- of Liegnitz (1241), 2:62, 99–102
- at Mohi, 2:19, 63, 102–105
- of Myriocephalum, 2:198
- of Qatwan, 2:180, 182
- of the Ugra River, 2:258
- Battle on the ice, 1:67
- Batu (1203–1255), 1:130
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:129
 - as founder of the Golden Horde, 1:130
 - Guyuk and, 1:130
 - his performance as a military leader, 1:130
 - invasion of Europe, 1:130, 2:18–19
 - invasion of Hungary, 2:100
 - invasion of northeastern Russia, 1:129–130
 - Jochi and, 1:129
 - Mohi, Battle of (April 1241), 2:103–104
 - Mongke and, 1:130
 - overview of, 1:122, 129–131
 - reputation of, 1:130
 - Toluid Revolution, 1:167
- Batu-Bolod, 1:27
- Batu-Mongke Dayan Khan, 1:27–28
- Bayan Chingsang, 2:196
- Bayan Noyan (1236–1295), 1:46, 49, 70, 182
- Baybars I (1223–1277)
 - alliance with Berke, 1:133
 - as al-Zahir (the Victorious), 1:132
 - Antioch, capture of, 1:133
 - Bahri Mamluks, 1:131
 - Battle of Ayn Jalut, 2:71
 - Cilicia, invasion of, 2:21–22
 - compared to Jalal al-Din, 1:123
 - conquest of Antioch, 2:174
 - full name of, 1:131
 - illustration of, 1:132
 - Mamluk Sultanate, transformation of, 1:133
 - military reforms of, 1:133
 - military training of, 1:131
 - against the Mongols, 1:132
 - overview of, 1:131–134
 - Qutuz and, 1:132
 - as the ruler of Egypt and Syria, 1:132
 - significance of, 1:131
 - successes of, 1:131
- Bayezid I, 2:67
- Bekhter, murder of, 1:154
- Bela IV (r. 1235–1270), 2:100, 103
- Belgunutei, 2:4
- Bella Antiochena* (Walter of the Chancellor), 2:170
- Benedict the Pole, 1:204
- Berber Marinid (1244–1465) dynasty, 1:158
- Berke Khan (r. 1257–1266)
 - Abaqa, 1:124, 125
 - Ariq Boke and, 1:20, 22
 - conversion to Islam, 1:xix, 2:32
 - Golden Horde, 1:3, 48
 - Hulegu and, 1:xix, 22
 - New Sarai and, 1:34
 - Nogai and, 1:24
 - overview of, 1:74
 - war with Hulegu, 1:xix–xx, 157
- Bernard of Valence, 2:168
- Bibi-Khanom, mosque of, 2:194
- Bi-chi, 2:140
- Bichqa, 1:168
- Black Death (mid-14th century)
 - biological warfare, attempt at, 2:10
 - Black Plague, 1:159
 - bubonic plague, 2:9
 - in Cairo, 2:10
 - cause of, 2:8–9
 - dates of, 2:8
 - death toll, 2:9, 10
 - death toll of the ruling Mongols, 2:61
 - economic impact of, 2:9, 10
 - forms of, 2:9
 - Gilles Li Muisis's account of the Black Death
 - at the siege of Kaffa (1347), 2:257
 - intercontinental trade routes, 2:10
 - Kaffa in the Crimea, 2:9–10, 257
 - overview of, 2:8–10
 - plague's transmission to Europe, 2:9
 - pneumonic plague, 2:9
 - Red Turban Revolt and, 2:3
 - septicemic type, 2:9

- spread of, 2:8
- vector of, 2:9
- Blue Horde
 - Bayan Khan, 1:70
 - boundaries of, 1:69
 - Chimtai Khan, 1:70
 - Golden Horde (Jochid Ulus), 1:69, 70
 - independence of, 1:70
 - Islam and, 1:69
 - Kupalak, 1:70
 - Mubarakh Khoja, 1:70
 - Orda and, 1:69–70
 - overview of, 1:69–71
 - Qara-Nogai, 1:70
 - Qonichi and, 1:70
 - as subordinate to the Golden Horde, 1:69
 - Toqa-Temur, 1:70
 - Toqtamysh, 1:70
 - Urus Khan, 1:70
 - White Horde, 1:70
- Bodonchar, 1:104, 2:5, 65
- Bohemond I of Taranto, 2:168, 169
- Bohemond II, 2:170
- Bohemond III, 2:172
- Bohemond IV, 2:173
- Bohemond V, 2:174
- Bohemond VI, 1:132, 2:174
- Bohemond VII, 2:174
- Bolok irgen*, 1:104, 105
- Bombs, 2:87
- Boniface VIII (Pope), 2:254
- Boqta* headdress, 2:221
- Borjigid, 2:6
- Borte (ca. 1161–1230)
 - abduction of, 1:134
 - daughters of, 1:134
 - establishment of the Mongol Empire, 1:134
 - as an example of Mongol womanhood, 1:135
 - first khatun of the empire, 1:134
 - marriage and, 1:134, 233
 - orphans and, 1:135
 - overview of, 1:122, 134–135
 - paternal illegitimacy question, 1:135
 - reputation of, 1:135
 - roles of elite Mongol women, 1:134–135
 - sons of, 1:134
 - Teb Tenggeri, 1:135, 2:53
 - Temujin and, 1:134, 233, 234
- Botoqui Tarqun, 1:203
- Bubonic plague, 2:9
- Buddhism
 - Chabi Khatun (d. 1281), 1:136, 137, 235
 - conversion to, 1:35, 37
 - Kara Khitai and, 2:180
 - Khubilai Khan (1215–1294), 2:154
 - Korean Buddhism, 2:187
 - overview of, 1:196
 - religious toleration, 1:2
 - second conversion to, 1:28
 - sects and groupings of, 1:196
 - Tibetan Buddhism, 1:137
 - Toqta Khan (r. 1290–1312), 1:53
 - White Lotus school of, 1:255–257
- Bugunutei, 2:4
- Bukharan Sayid Ajall, 1:7
- Bulukhan, 1:45
- Bunyashiri, 1:27
- Buqa, 1:16
- Buqatu Salji, 2:5, 6
- Buqu Qadagi, 2:5, 6
- Buriats, 2:145–146
- Buriyat Mongols, 1:202
- Bursuq ibn Bursuq of Hamadan, 2:170
- Buyid (934–1062), 2:166
- Buyiruc Khan, 2:80–81
- Caizhou, siege of (1233–1234)
 - cannibalism, 2:75
 - expertise in siege warfare, 2:63
 - flood the Ju River, 2:76
 - Jin Imperial Guard, desertion of, 2:75
 - Mongol-Jin War (1211–1234), 2:75, 76
 - overview of, 2:75–77
 - Song and, 2:75
 - Tachar Noyan, 2:75
- Calendar
 - confusion, 2:126
 - Daming li* calendar, 2:125
 - design of, 2:125
 - Gengwu* calendar, 2:125
 - government and the calendar, 2:124–125
 - Gregorian calendar, 2:125
 - Khubilai Khan and, 2:126
 - Muslim Astronomy Bureau (Huihui sitian jian), 2:126
 - overview of, 2:124–127

- Shoushi li* (season-granting calendar), 2:126–127
- Sino-Uyghur calendar, 2:126
- 12-animal cycle to mark the years, 2:125
- Uyghur system, 2:125
- Wannian li* calendar, 2:126
- Yelu Chucai (1189–1243), 2:125
- Caliph al-Mustaʿsim, 2:166
- Caliph al-Nasir (r. 1180–1225), 2:166, 167
- Caliph al-Qaʿim (1031–1075), 2:166, 167
- Cannibalism, 2:75
- Cannon
- earliest cannons, 2:77
 - effectiveness of, 2:77–78
 - gunpowder, 2:77
 - illustration of, 2:78
 - knights and infantry, against, 2:77–78
 - Ming use of, 2:78
 - Mongol use of, 2:77
 - overview of, 2:64, 77–79
 - role in defeating the Mongols, 2:78
 - steppe warfare, 2:78
 - Yuan use of, 2:78
- Caracole* tactic, 2:111
- Cartography, 2:188
- Castle Masyaf in Syria (image of), 1:200
- Catholicism, 2:189
- Census, application of
- cheriks* and, 2:62
 - conscription and, 2:82
 - of Ghazan, 1:113
 - of Mongke, 1:167
 - organization of households, 2:86
 - overview of, 2:50
 - of Shigi-Qutuqtu (ca. 1180–1262), 1:84
- Chabi Khatun (d. 1281)
- as advisor to her husband, 1:136, 137
 - character of, 1:137
 - description of, 1:137
 - her role as empress, 1:136
 - husband of, 1:136
 - opinions of, 1:136
 - overview of, 1:55, 123, 136–137
 - power of, 1:136
 - reputation of, 1:136
 - Song dynasty and, 1:137
 - Tibetan Buddhism and, 1:136–137, 235
 - tribe and family of, 1:136
- Chagatai Khan (d. 1242)
- adherence to the *yasa* and *yosun* of Chinggis Khan, 1:139
 - alternative spellings for, 1:138
 - appanage (*ulus*) of, 1:138
 - combat duties of, 1:138
 - death of, 1:139
 - death of a son, 1:139
 - invasion of the Jin Empire, 1:138
 - Mawarannahr, 1:138
 - Mogetuken, 1:139
 - Ogodei and, 1:138
 - overview of, 1:138–140
 - reputation of, 1:139
 - responsibilities of, 1:138
 - sons of, 1:138–139
 - wives (primary) of, 1:138
 - Yisulun, 1:138
- Chagatai Khanate
- Alghu, 1:71
 - Ariq Boke, 1:71
 - Baraq, 1:72
 - border clashes, 1:72
 - border war, 1:71
 - Chagatai Khanate, recognition of, 1:3
 - Chagatayids and, 1:71
 - Chapar, 1:72
 - Du'a, 1:72
 - exploitation of, 1:71
 - Khubilai Khan and, 1:3
 - location of, 1:71
 - Moghulistan and Mawarannahr split, 1:72–73
 - Mubarak Shah, 1:71–72
 - Muslims and, 1:146
 - Orghina, 1:71, 72
 - overview of, 1:71–73
 - Peace of Qatwan (1267), 1:72
 - population of, 1:71
 - Qaidu, 1:72
 - Qara Hulegu, 1:71
 - rulers of, 2:260–261
 - Tarmashirin (r. 1326–1333), 1:72
- Chagatayids, 2:48
- Chaghan, 1:248
- Chakirmaut, Battle of (1204)
- Buyirug Khan, 2:80–81
 - Chinggis Khan and, 2:62, 79
 - description of, 2:79–80

- keshik* (bodyguard) in, 2:79
 Naiman and, 2:79
 overview of, 2:79–81
 precipitating events, 2:79–80
 significance of, 2:79, 80
 tactics and, 2:79, 80
- Ch'ang Te or Chang De, 2:232–233
- Chapar, 1:72
- Cherik* troops
 census and, 2:82
 conscription and, 2:81
 definition of, 2:81
 effectiveness of, 2:62
 Han *cheriks*, 2:81, 82
 non-*cherik* forces, 2:82
 overview of, 2:81–83
 positioning of, 2:82
 regular forces, 2:82
- Chila'un, 2:90, 91
- Chimtai Khan (r. 1344–1360), 1:6–7, 70
- China, conquest of, 1:115
- Chinese resentment of the Mongols, 2:44
- Chinggis Exchange
 definition of, 2:11
Huihui yaofang (Muslim Medicinal Recipes), 2:12
 Khwarazmians, 2:11
 knowledge of gunpowder, 2:88
 long-distance trade, 2:11
 medical exchanges, 2:12
The Mongol Conquests in World History (May), 2:11
 Mongol court culture, 2:11
 overview of, 2:11–13
 significance of, 2:4
Tanksuq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'ulum-i khitay (Treasure Book of the Il-Khans on the Sciences and Learning of China), 2:12
 technology, 2:12
yam, postal system, 2:11
- Chinggis Khan (1164–1227)
 achievements of, 1:140, 142–143
 Baljuna Covenant, 2:1
 Battle of Chakirmaut (1204), 2:62, 79–81
 Battle of the Irtysh River (1209), 2:62
 Battle of the Kalka River (1224), 2:62
 Bekhter, murder of, 1:140
 Buyiruc Khan, 2:80–81
 captivity of, 1:140
 confirming Temujin as Chinggis Khan, 2:39, 41
 cultural achievements of, 1:142–143
darqan, 1:48
 death of, 2:2
 decimal organization, 2:86
 defeat of the Kereit, 1:141
 defeat of the Naiman, 1:141
 hardships of, 1:140–141
 his rise to power, 1:140, 2:1
 illustration of, 1:141
 influence of his family, 2:53
 invitation to the Daoist monk K'iu Ch'ang Ch'un (May 15, 1219), 2:220–221
 Irtysh River, Battle of the (1209), 2:89–91
 Jamuqa and, 2:59, 80, 125
 Jin Empire, war with, 1:142
 Jurchedei and, 2:40
 as Jurchen vassal, 1:213
 Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan), 1:219
 Khwarazmian Empire war, 1:142
 the Khwarazmians, 2:35
 medicine and, 2:140
 military and, 2:61–62
 Oration at the Sack of Bukhara (ca. 1220), 2:223
 Otrar Massacre (1218), 2:35, 36
 overview of, 1:xv–xvii, 121, 140–143
 passage from *Jami'u't-Tawarikh* (Compendium of Chronicles) in which Chinggis Khan explains the best things in life (early 14th century), 2:254
 plunder and, 1:142
 primary concern, 1:xvii
 Qasar, relationship with, 2:52
quriltai of 1206 and, 2:1, 39–41
 rule of, 2:52, 53
 Samarkand and, 2:193
The Secret History of the Mongols, 2:149
Shengwu qinzheng lu, 2:150–151
 Teb Tenggeri death and, 2:52
 Temuge Otchigin, 2:53
 as Temujin, 1:140
 title of, 1:47
 Toghril Ong Khan and, 1:141
uluses, 1:63
 unification of Mongolia, 1:62, 140, 141

- Uyghuristan, 2:204
 writing systems, 1:64, 108
 Xi Xia, conquest of, 1:141–142, 2:205, 206
yasa, 1:58, 78
 Yeke Monggol Ulus and, 1:140, 141
 Yesugei, death of, 2:1
yosun, 1:58
 Zhongdu, 2:211
- Chinggis Khan, death of (1227)
 Altan Urugh and the Chinggisid Principle,
 2:15
 burial of, 2:14
 date and place of, 2:13
 overview of, 2:13–15
 siege of Zhongxing, 2:13
 stories of, 2:13–14
 successor of, 2:14
 Yeke Monggol Ulus and, 2:14
- Chin-Temur, 1:86, 102
- Choban (d. 1327)
 Abu Said and, 1:127, 128, 144–145
 Dimaqsh Khwaja and, 1:144
 Hasan Kuchuk (Hasan the Lesser), 1:145
 killing of, 1:145
 marriage of, 1:143
 as a military commander, 1:143
 overview of, 1:143–145
 Sorqan Shira, 1:145
- Chormaqan Noyan (ca. 1200–1240)
 Abbasid Caliphate, 2:166
 death of, 2:84
 in Iran, 2:84
 notable *tanmachi*, 2:62
 overview of, 2:83–85
 sack of Gandzak, 2:84
 significance of, 2:83
 in Transcaucasia, 2:84
 transfer of authority, 1:101–102
 tsunami strategy and, 2:98
- Choros Batula Chingsan (d. ca. 1416), 1:232
- Christianity, 1:14, 2:33
- Chronology, 1:xxv–xxvii
- Chubei, 1:168
- Church of Mary in Ephesus, photograph of, 1:229
- Cilician Armenia, 2:168
- Civil war, 1:xx, 3
- Cleaves, Francis W., 2:150
- Clothes
 animal skins, 2:127
 boots, 2:128
boqta headdress, 2:221
deel, 2:128
 fashion influences, 2:129
 felt, 2:127, 131
 furs, 2:127
 gold brocade, 2:129
 headgear, 2:129
 materials, 2:127, 129
 overview of, 2:122, 127–130
 Phags-pa script and, 2:129–130
 silk, 2:129
 sox, 2:128
 trousers, 2:128
 wool, 2:127
- Coinage, 2:122
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 2:251
- Composite bow, 2:89, 118, 119
- Confucianism (Neo-Confucianism), 1:243
- Constance, 2:171, 172
- Constantine of Lampron, 2:173
- Contagious diseases, 2:61
- Council of Ephesus, 1:229, 230
- Counterweight trebuchets
 depictions of, 2:106
 development of, 2:115
 Khubilai Khan and, 2:63, 115
 overview of, 2:63
 Polo, Marco, on, 2:237
 the term “trebuchet,” 2:114
 at Xiangyang, 2:208
- Crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249)
 accomplishments of, 2:17
 criticism of, 2:17
 crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249),
 2:17
 Crusades term, 2:16
 First Council of Lyons (12.5), 2:17
 Frederick II and the Mongols, 2:16, 17
 Gregory IX (Pope), 2:16, 17
 Holy Roman Empire and, 2:17
 initial call for, 2:16
 Innocent IV (Pope), 2:17
 Kingdom of Jerusalem, 2:16
 overview of, 2:16–18
 plenary indulgences, 2:17
 Teutonic Knights, 2:17

- Da Yuan (Khanate China), 1:116
- Daidu
- architecture of, 1:5
 - building of, 1:5
 - curfew, 1:5
 - as Dadu, 1:4
 - destruction of, 1:6
 - imperial residences, 1:5
 - Khubilai and, 1:4
 - Li Bingzhong, 1:4
 - location of, 1:4, 5
 - overview of, 1:3, 4–6
 - planning of, 1:4, 5
- Daimbert of Jerusalem, 2:168
- Dalbag, 1:27
- Darkhad *onggons*, 2:146
- Daruqachin*, 1:9
- Dayan Khan, 1:26
- Dayir Noyan, 1:102
- Dayir Usun, 1:227
- De Rachewiltz, Igor, 2:150
- Decimal organization
- arban*, 2:85
 - arban-u noyan/mingan-u noyan*, 2:85–86
 - in China, 2:86
 - Chinggis Khan and, 2:86
 - first known use, 2:85
 - household application of, 2:86–87
 - jagun*, 2:85
 - jagun-u noyan*, 2:86
 - Jurchen and, 2:86
 - Kereit and, 2:86
 - the *kuriyen*, 2:86
 - mingans*, 2:86, 87
 - noyan* (commander), 2:85
 - overview of, 2:85–87
 - in Russia, Transcaucasia, and the Middle East, 2:86
 - at the squad level, 2:85–86
 - taxation and, 2:87
 - tumen*, 2:85
 - tumen* unit, 2:87
 - users of, 2:85
- Deel*, 2:128
- Deguang (927–947), 1:218
- Dei Sechen, 1:234
- Delhi Sultanate
- Ala-ud-Din Khalji, 2:175
 - definition of, 2:174
 - Ghiyas-ud-Din Balban, 2:175
 - Ilututish, 2:175
 - Ilututish, photograph of the tomb of, 2:175
 - Jalal-ud-Din Firuz Khalji, 2:175
 - Khalji dynasty, 2:175
 - Lodi dynasty (1451–1526), 2:176
 - Muhammad ibn Tughluq, 2:175
 - origins of, 2:174
 - overview of, 2:174–176
 - Qutb-ud-Din Aybak, 2:174
 - Raziyya, Sultana, 2:175
 - Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451), 2:176
 - slave dynasty, 2:174, 175
 - Tughluq dynasty, 2:175, 176
- The Devil's Horsemen* (Chambers), 2:69
- Dhikr*, 1:246
- Dhu al-Nun al-Misri, 1:245
- Dimaqsh Khwaja, 1:144
- Dimashq, 1:144
- Din, Rashid al-, 1:51
- Dobun Mergen, 2:4–5
- Dog, 2:131
- Dome of the Rock, 2:16
- Doquz Khatun (d. 1265)
- as a diplomatic touchstone for conquered Christian populations, 1:147
 - family of, 1:146
 - Hulegu and, 1:146
 - influence of, 1:146, 147
 - marriages of, 1:146
 - Muslims and, 1:146
 - Nestorian Christians and, 1:146, 147
 - overview of, 1:123, 146–147
 - reputation of, 1:94, 147
- Dorbei Doqshin, 1:203–204
- Dorben noqas* (four hounds), 2:90, 109
- Dore Temur (r. 1330–1331), 2:48
- Du'a, 1:72
- Du'a Soqor, 2:4
- Dual government
- arghun-aqa, 1:7
 - bichigchi* and *daruqachi*, 1:7
 - bodyguards, 1:6
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:6–7
 - clan, 1:6–7
 - duanshi guan*, 1:8
 - the *jarquchi*, 1:7, 8

- local terminology and, 1:7
 the *mingan*, 1:6
 in Mongol China, 1:8
 overview of, 1:2, 6–8
 pivot (*qol*) army, 1:6
sheng, 1:7
tumen, 1:6
xingsheng, 1:7
Yuan shi (History of the Yuan Dynasty), 1:8
Zhongshu ling, 1:7
 Duke Frederick V of Swabia, 2:172
 Durlukin tribes, 2:5
- Eastern Europe, invasion of, 2:109
 Eastern Mongols, 2:113
 Edgu-Temur, 1:102
 Edigu, 1:4, 25
 Elbeg Nigulesugchi, assassination of, 1:232
 Eleanor of Aquitaine, 2:171
 Eljigidei (r. 1327–1330), 2:48
 Esen Taishi (r. 1438–1454), 1:27
 Ethnic groups, overview of, 1:195
 See also specific groups
- Europe, invasion of (1240–1241)
 Baidar and Orda, 2:18, 19, 100, 101
 Battle of at Mohi (1241), 2:19
 Batu (fl. 1230–1255), 2:18
 Bela, 2:19
 calls for a crusade, 2:19–20
 Central Europe invasion, 2:18, 19
 conquest of Rus', 2:18
 Henry of Silesia (1238–1241), 2:18
 Holy Roman Empire, 2:19, 20
 Hungary, 2:18, 19, 20
 King Vaclav I (1230–1253), 2:18
 Liegnitz, 2:18
 overview of, 2:16–18
 Poland, 2:18
 Qadan, 2:19
 quriltai of 1234, 2:18
 Subedei, 2:19
 Thomas of Spalato on, 2:20
 trauma of, 2:18
- Fabian tactics, 2:111
 Fan Wanhu, 2:24
 Fatima, 1:52, 151, 170
 Felt, 2:121, 122
- Fire lance, 2:87
 Fireworks, 2:87
 First Council of Lyons (12.5), 2:17
 Five Snouts
 airag (kumiss), 2:132
 by-products, 2:131
 camel meat, 2:132
 camels, 2:131
 cattle, 2:130–131
 cows and yaks, 2:130
 the dog, 2:131
 felt, 2:131, 127
 gers (yurt), 2:131
 the horse, 2:130
 horses to pasture, 2:131
 khainag, a yak-cow, 2:130–131
 leather, 2:131
 milk, 2:132
 overview of, 2:121, 130–132
 sheep, 2:130
- Forest People
 Botoqui Tarqun, 1:203–204
 Buriyat Mongols, 1:202
 current status of, 1:202
 definition of, 1:202
 destruction of the Uyghur Khanate
 (744–840), 1:202
 Dorbei Doqshin and, 1:203–204
 Mongol conquest of, 1:202–203
 Naiman and, 1:227
 Oirat and, 1:202
 overview of, 1:202–204
 Qorchi and, 1:203
 Qorchi's prophecy and problem, 1:203
 Qori Tumed, 1:203
 tribes of, 1:202
 uprising of the Forest Peoples (1217–1218),
 1:203–204, 232
- Four Heroes, 1:90
 Franciscan Odoric of Pordenone, 1:205
 Franciscans
 Benedict the Pole, 1:204
 conversion of the Alan *keshigten*,
 1:205
 failure of Catholicism, 1:205
 Francis of Assisi (1182–1226), 1:204
 as the Friars Minor, 1:204
 Innocent III (Pope), 1:204

- Innocent IV (Pope), 1:204
 John of Monte Corvino, 1:205
 John of Plano Carpini, 1:204
 Nestorian Alans, 1:205
 overview of, 1:204–206
 William of Rubruck, 1:205
 Frederick I Barbarossa, 2:172, 198
 Frederick II, 2:16, 17, 173
 Fulk, 2:170
- Gaochang Uyghur kingdom, 1:253
 Gediminas (r. 1315–1341/1342), 2:190
 Geikhatu (r. 1291–1295), 1:16, 78
Gers (yurt), 2:131
 Ghazan (1271–1304, r. 1295–1304)
 administrative apparatus, the establishment
 of, 1:149
 conversion to Islam, image of, 2:34
 date and place of birth, 1:148
 death of, 1:149
 early life and education, 1:148
 economic reform and, 1:148
 family of, 1:148
 “Ghazan Leaves Tabriz” miniature, image
 of, 1:148
 Islam and, 1:148, 149
 Islamization of the Mongols, 2:255
Jami' al-Tawarikh (Compendium of
 Chronicles), 1:148
 legacy of, 1:149–150
 length of reign, 1:148
 letter to Pope Boniface VIII (April 1302),
 2:254–255
 Mongol and Islamic political thought,
 synthesizing of, 1:149
 Nowruz and, 1:149
 Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316) and, 1:173
 overview of, 1:122, 148–150
 Ghiyas-ud-Din Balban, 2:175
 Ghiyath al-Din, 1:160
 Ghurid dynasty (1011–1215), 2:183
 Gilles Li Muisis (d. 1352), 2:257
 Girei, 1:254
 Giyath al-Din Kaykhusraw (1237–1245),
 2:98
 Glossary, 2:263–267
 Goats, 2:122
 Godfrey of Bouillon (1100), 2:168
- Gok Turk Empire (568–630), 2:184
 Golden Horde
 alliance with the Mamluks, 2:191–192
 Altan Orda, 1:73
 Batu (1227–1255), 1:73, 74, 130
 Berke (1255–1267), 1:74
 Blue Horde and, 1:69
 Chinggis Khan (1165–1227), 1:73
 conversion to Islam, 1:74
 descendants of, 1:75
 expansion of the realm of, 1:73
 fragmentation of, 1:74
 golden age of, 1:74
 Jochi (fl. 1184–1225), 1:73
 Kipchak steppes and, 2:186
 Mamai, defeat of, 1:74
 Mongke Temur (1266–1279), 1:74
 Ogodei Khan, 1:73
 origin of the name, 74
 origin of the term, 1:69
 original lands of, 1:73
 overview of, 1:xx, 73–75
 rulers of, 2:260
 Russian principalities and, 1:74
 Toqtamysh, 1:74
 in Transcaucasia and Iran, 1:3
 Uzbek Khan, 1:74
- Gosset, 2:56
 Government and politics
 administration of, 1:7
 Almaliq, 1:2
 bodyguard establishment, 1:6, 8
 captials of, 1:2–3
 Chinggis Khan, 1:6–7
 cities of, 1:2–3
 civil war, 1:3
 Dadu, 1:4–6
 Daidu, 1:3
 Dayan divides his empire, 1:26
 dual government, 1:2, 6–8
 Edigu, 1:25
 Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), 1:1
 immigrant religions and Mongol China,
 1:13–15
 important events affecting, 1:3–4
 inadequacies of the Mongol government,
 1:1
inju, 1:15–17

- Karakorum, 1:2, 17–20
- Khubilai becomes khan (May 5, 1260), 1:3, 20–22
- Mongol Empire, dissolution of (1216), 1:3, 22–24
- Mongol-Chinese system of the *xingsheng*, 1:7
- New Sarai, 1:34
- Nogai (d. 1299), 1:24–26
- Northern Yuan (1368–1634), 1:26–29
- overview essay, 1:1–4
- Paiza*, 1:29–31
- quriltai*, 1:3, 4, 31–33
- religious toleration, 1:2
- Sarai, 1:2, 33–35
- shamanism, 1:35–37
- Shangdu, 1:37–39
- Sultaniyya, 1:39–41
- Tabriz, 1:3, 42–43
- Temur Khan (r. 1294–1307), 1:44–46
- terminology in, 1:7
- territorial claims, 1:3
- titles, 1:46–48
- Toghon Temur (r. 1333–1370), 1:4, 48–50
- Toregene, the wife of Ogodei, 1:1
- Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246), 1:51–52
- Uzbek Khan (1282–1341; r. 1313–1341), 1:53–55
- women in the court, 1:1–2, 55–57
- yasa*, 1:58–59
- Government structure
- altan urugh* (Golden Family), 1:8
- daruqachin*, 1:9
- Guyuk's election (1246), 1:10–13
- jarquchis* (provincial governors), 1:9
- the *keshik*, 1:9
- overview of, 1:8–10
- the *quriltai*, 1:8
- the *shis*, 1:9–10
- tanma* military units, 1:9
- Great Wall of China
- costs of, 2:134
- failures of, 2:133–134
- length of, 2:133
- manning of, 2:133
- Ming dynasty and, 2:132, 133–134
- overview of, 2:124, 132–134
- purpose of, 2:133
- Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE), 2:133
- Shang dynasty and, 2:133
- view from space, 2:134
- Gregory IX (Pope), 2:17
- Groups and organizations
- Alans (Asud), 1:194, 197–199
- the Assassins (1090–1256 CE), 1:196, 199–202
- Buddhism, 1:196
- commercial groups, 1:197
- ethnic groups, overview of, 1:195
- Forest People, 1:202–204
- Franciscans, 1:204–206
- Italians, 1:195, 206–209
- Jews, 1:196, 209–211
- Jurchen, 1:195, 212–213
- juyin*, 1:197, 214–215
- Kereit, 1:193–194, 215–217
- Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan), 1:195, 217–220
- Kipchaks, 1:194–195, 196, 220–222
- Mamluks, 1:196, 222–225
- Merkit, 1:194, 225–227
- miscellaneous groups, 1:196–197
- Naiman, 1:194, 227–229
- Nestorian Christians, 1:196, 229–231
- Oirat, 1:194, 231–233
- Onggirad, 1:194, 233–235
- Onggud, 1:194, 235–237
- ortoq* (*ortaq*, *ortagh*), 1:237–240
- other groups, 1:196–197
- overview essay, 1:193–196
- religious groups, overview of, 1:195–196
- Sakya Buddhists, 1:240–242
- Semuren, 1:197, 242–244
- Sufis, 1:244–247
- Tangut, 1:195, 247–249
- Tatars, 1:193, 249–251
- tribes, overview of, 1:193–194
- Uyghurs, 1:195, 251–253
- Uzbeks, 1:254–255
- White Lotus Buddhists, 1:255–257
- Guchulug, 1:228, 2:161, 181
- Gunpowder, 2:45
- accuracy and, 2:89
- bombs, 2:87
- cannon, 2:88
- explosive gunpowder, 2:88

- fire lance, 2:87
- fireworks, 2:87
- horse archer and, 2:89
- knowledge of, 2:88
- and Mongol military dominance, 2:89
- naptha, 2:88
- outside of China, 2:88
- overview of, 2:87–89
- rocket, 2:88
- thunder crash bombs, 2:88
- weaponized gunpowder, 2:64, 87, 88
- Gur-e Amir mausoleum, 2:194
- Gure'ën*, 1:105
- Gur-khan*, 2:179–180
- Guyuk (r. 1246–1248)
 - accomplishments of, 1:151
 - Batu and, 1:130
 - death of, 1:130
 - dismissal of, 1:130
 - Fatima, execution of, 1:151, 52
 - generosity of, 1:151
 - image of, 1:151
 - importance of, 1:150
 - Mongol conquests, resumption of, 1:152
 - Nestorian Christian, 1:150
 - Oghul Qaimish, primary wife of, 1:150, 152
 - overview of, 1:1, 130, 150–153
 - personality of, 1:150
 - Qara Hulegu and, 1:153
 - religion and, 1:152
 - ruthlessness of, 1:151
 - sons of, 1:150
 - Temuge, 1:151
 - Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246), 1:150, 152
 - yam* passports, 1:151
 - Yesu Mongke and, 1:153
- Guyuk's election (1246)
 - Batu, 1:10, 1:11
 - Berke, 1:12
 - a challenge to the throne, 1:12
 - death of Ogodei, 1:10
 - Koten, 1:11
 - Malik Oghul, 1:12
 - Orda, 1:11
 - overview of, 1:10–13
 - Paul, 1:11
 - Shiremun, 1:11
 - taxation, 1:11
 - Temuge Otchigin, 1:12
 - Toregene, the wife of Ogodei, 1:1, 10
- Hambis, Louis, 2:152
- Han *cheriks*, 2:81–82
- Hard wheat, 2:147
- Hasan Kuchuk (Hasan the Lesser), 1:145
- Hasan Sabbah (d. 1124), 1:200
- Headgear, 2:129
- Hei Jun (Black Army), 2:82
- Henry of Champagne, 2:173
- Henry of Silesia (1238–1241), 2:18, 101
- Herbal medicine, 2:140
- Hethum, King of Cilicia (r. 1226–1269),
 - submission of
 - Abaqa and, 2:21
 - capture of Aleppo/Damascus, 2:21
 - clergy and taxation, 2:21
 - consequences of, 2:21
 - Hethum's relationship with the Mongols, 2:21
 - importance of Hethum, 2:21
 - on Jerusalem, 2:21
 - Kaykhusraw request for troops, 2:20
 - Leon and Thoros, 2:21
 - Mongke Khan, 2:21
 - new *jarliq* (decree) of Mongke Khan, 2:21
 - overview of, 2:20–22
 - submission to Baiju, 2:20
 - wisdom of voluntary submission, 2:20–21
- Hetum of Cilicia., 2:174
- He'um the Monk (d. 1310), 2:65, 66
- Hevajra Tantra*, 1:240–241
- Hoelun (d. ca. 1210)
 - abandonment of, 1:154, 2:58–59
 - adopted sons of, 1:154
 - Bekhter, murder of, 1:154
 - children of, 1:153–154
 - as an exemplar for Mongol women, 1:154
 - herbal medicine, 2:140
 - as the matriarch of the Chinggisid lineage, 1:153
 - Merkit grudge, 1:154
 - as model mother, 1:153
 - overview of, 1:122, 153–155
 - reputation of, 1:153
 - rescue of Qasar, 1:154
 - significance of, 1:154–155

- Temujin and, 1:154
 Yesugei and, 1:153, 2:58
 Holy Roman Empire, 2:16, 17, 19–20
 Hong Tagu, 2:24
 Horse
 horses to pasture, 2:131, 135
 overview of, 2:135–137
 saddle and other equipment, 2:137
 sources for, 2:135
 tanmachi and, 1:98–99
 trading and selling, 2:137
 training, 2:135, 136
 Hounds, steeds, and Paladins, 2:109
 Hu Sihui, 2:156
Huihui yaofang (Muslim Medicinal Recipes), 2:12
 Huisi (515–576), 1:256
 Huiwen, 1:255
 Hulegu (1217–1265)
 against the Abbasid Caliphate, 1:156
 at Aleppo, 1:156
 the Assassins and, 1:155–156
 assessment of, 1:157
 Baghdad, siege of (1258), 2:73–74
 Berke and, 1:157
 Doquz Khatun (d. 1265) and, 1:146
 family of, 1:155
 Il-Khanate, 1:75–76
 image of, 1:156
 letter to King Louis IX of France (1262), 2:236
 Mongol Empire, dissolution of, 1:22, 23
 overview of, 1:122, 155–157
 Tabriz and, 1:42
 Hungary, 2:18, 19, 102–104
 Hungary loses allies, 2:104
 Huns (ca. 395–500 CE), 2:184
 Hunting, 2:110
 Ibaqa, as a gift, 2:40
 Ibn Alqami, 2:72–74
 Ibn al-Athir, 2:215–217
 Ibn Battuta (1304–1369)
 Berber Marinid (1244–1465) dynasty, 1:158
 at the court of the Tarmashirin, 1:158
 date and place of birth, 1:157
 Delhi Sultanate, 1:158
 legal training, 1:158
 Muhammad Tughluq (r. 1325–1351), 1:158
 mystical Islam, 1:158
 overview of, 1:124, 157–159
 Rihla (Book of Travels), 1:158, 159
 in Tangier, 1:158
 travels of, 1:157–158
 Ilghazi of Mardin, 2:170
 Il-khan Hulegu (r. 1256–1265), 2:126
 Il-Khanate
 Abu Said Bahadur Khan (r. 1318–1335), 1:76
 administration of, 1:76
 administrative and economic center of, 1:76
 artistic and literary efflorescence, 1:76
 collapse of, 1:76
 culture and the il-khans, 1:77
 definition of term, 1:75
 founders of, 1:122
 Hulegu (d. 1265) and, 1:75–76
 instability in, 1:76
 Islam as a state religion, 2:3
 Khubilai Khan, recognition of, 1:3
 location of, 1:75
 Mongke (r. 1251–1259), 1:74
 Nizari Ismailis, 1:75
 Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), 1:175
 overview of, 1:xx, 75–77
 rulers of, 2:259–260
 Tabriz and, 1:76
 Trebizond and, 2:201
 tribute payment, 1:76
 Ilututnish, 2:175
 Ilututnish, photograph of the tomb of, 2:175
 Immigrant religions in Mongol China
 Christianity, 1:14
 Islam, 1:13–14
 Inalchuq (d. 1219), 2:35–36
 Inancha Bilge Khan, 1:227
 Individuals
 Abaqa (r. 1265–1282), 1:124–126
 Abu Said (r. 1317–1335), 1:126–129
 Batu (1203–1255), 1:122, 129–131
 Baybars I (1223–1277), 1:123, 131–134
 Borte (ca. 1161–1230), 1:134–135
 Chabi Khatun (d. 1281), 1:136–137
 Chagatai Khan (d. 1242), 1:123, 138–140
 Chinggis Khan (1164–1227), 1:140–143

- Chinggis Khan, sons of, 1:121
 Choban (d. 1327), 1:143–145
 Doquz Khatun (d. 1265), 1:123, 146–147
 Ghazan (1271–1304, r. 1295–1304), 148–150
 Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), 1:150–153
 Hoelun (d. ca. 1210), 1:153–155
 Hulegu (1217–1265), 1:155–157
 Ibn Battuta (1304–1369), 1:124, 157–159
 the il-khans, 1:122
 Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah (r. 1221–1230),
 1:123, 159–162
 Jochi (d. 1225), 1:162–164
 Khubilai Khan (1215–1294), 1:164–166
 Mongke Khan (1209–1259, r. 1251–1259),
 1:166–169
 Mongol khatuns (queens), 1:122–123
 number of khans, 1:121
 Oghul Qaimish Khatun (d. 1251), 1:169–171
 Ogodei Khan (1186–1241), 1:171–173
 Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), 1:173–176
 Orghina Khatun (d. 1261), 1:123, 176–178
 overview essay, 1:121–124
 Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324), 1:178–180
 Qaidu (1230–1301), 1:180–183
 Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252), 1:123, 183–186
 Timur-i Leng (1336–1405), 1:124, 186–188
 Tolui Khan (1191–1232), 1:189–190
 Toqtamysh (d. 1406), 1:191–192
 Uzbek Khan, 1:122
- Indonesia, 2:188
- Inju*
dalay and, 1:16
 definition of the term, 1:15
 distinction between *dalay* and *inju*, 1:16
 grants of *inju* land, 1:15
 overview of, 1:15–17
qubi land distribution, 1:15
qubi landholdings, 1:15–16
 transmission and management of *inju* land,
 1:16
tunluq property classification, 1:16
- Inner Mongolia, 2:25
 Inner Mongolian *tanma*, 2:112, 113
 Innocent III (Pope)
 Francis of Assisi, 1:204
 Principality of Antioch, 2:173
 Innocent IV (Pope)
 Baiju and, 1:68
 crusade against the Mongols, 2:17
 John of Plano Carpini, 1:204, 2:29
 Intellectual achievement, 2:123–124
 Irtysh River, Battle of the (1209)
 Chila'un, 2:90, 91
 impact of Naiman and Merkit, 2:90
 Jebe (Jirqo'adai), 2:90
 Merkit, 2:90–91
 the Naiman, 1:228
 the Naiman and Merkit, 2:89–90
 overview of, 2:89–91
 Qaidu, 1:183
 Qutu, 2:90
 significance of, 2:89, 91
- Isa the translator (d. early 14th century), 2:141
- Islam
 overview of, 1:13–14
 as a state religion, 2:3
See also Mongol conversion to Islam;
 Muslims
- Islamization of the Mongols, 2:255
- Ismail, 1:255
- Italians
 family of Marco Polo (1254–1324), 1:207
 Genoa and Venice trading, 1:206, 207, 208
 Mongols' relations with Genoa and Venice,
 1:207–208
 overview of, 1:196, 206–209
 Polo sailing from Venice in 1271 (painting),
 1:208
 slave trade, 1:207
 trading networks of, 1:207
 wars between the Il-Khanate and the
 Mamluk Sultanate, 1:207
- Ivanovich, Dmitri, 2:29–30, 31
- Izz al-Din, Malik, 2:73, 74
- Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah (r. 1221–1230)
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:159–160
 conquests of, 1:160
 defeat of, 1:160–161, 2:183
 and the expansion of the medieval world,
 1:160–161
 in India, 1:160
 Kirman and Fars vassals, 1:160
 murder of, 1:160
 overview of, 1:123, 159–162
 pursuit of Jalal al-Din, 1:161

- requests help against the Mongols (ca. 1230),
2:225
- Sufi mystical poetry, 1:247
- Jalal-ud-Din Firuz Khalji, 2:175
- Jalayir Mongol Muqali (d. 1223), 2:112
- Jami'at al-Tawarikh* (Compendium of
Chronicles), 1:148, 2:123
- Jamuqa, 2:59, 80, 125
- Janibek, 1:254
- Japan, invasion of (1274, 1280)
depiction of, 2:23
Fan Wanhu, 2:24
Hakata Bay, 2:24
Hong Tagu, 2:24
Khubilai Khan, 2:22–23, 24
Korea, 2:24
of November 1274, 2:23
overview of, 2:22–25
samurai, 2:24
second invasion of, 2:24
- Jarquchi*, 1:7, 8, 9
- Java, invasion of (1292–1293)
Chinese versus Java sources on, 2:93
civil war and, 2:92
Javanese sources on, 2:92, 93
Kertnagara (King), 2:92
Khubilai Khan (1215–1294) and, 2:
91–92, 93
overview of, 2:91–93
relations with Java, 2:92
relationship between Java and Khubilai's
China, 2:92
submission to the Mongols, 2:92
Wiraraja (King), 2:92, 93
- Jebe (Jirqo'adai), 2:90, 95, 108
- Jerome (Saint), 2:12
- Jerusalem, 1:161, 2:16, 21, 43
- Jews
Jewish sources on the Mongols, 1:210
kosher, eating, 1:211
lost tribes of Israel, 1:209
methods of slaughtering animals, 1:211
Mongol invasions and conquests, 1:210
Mongol use of, 1:210
Mongol view of, 1:209–210
the Mongols and the Jewish community in
Armenia, 1:209
overview of, 1:196, 209–211
- practical influence of the Jews in the Mongol
Empire, 1:211
- Rabbi Nissim of Marseilles, 1:210
- Rabbi Yossef ben Kasp, 1:210
- Jia Jinyan, 2:152
- Jia Sidao, 2:196
- Jin Empire (1125–1234)
Aguda (1068–1123), 2:176
Altan Khan (Golden Khan) name, 2:176
depiction of a battle between the Mongol
and Jin Jurchen armies, 2:177
founder of, 2:176
Jurchen, 2:176, 178–179
juyin peoples, 2:177, 178
Khitan capitals, 2:176
Mongol defeat of, 2:177–178
overview of, 2:161–162, 176–179
population of, 2:177
the raw and the cooked, 2:178
rebellion in, 2:177
Song Empire wars, 2:177
split in, 2:177
survival of, 2:178
tribute to Chinggis Khan, 1: xv
written language of, 2:178
Wu-ku-sun Chung Tuan's account of his
embassy to Chinggis Khan (ca. 1220),
2:222–223
Zhangzong (r. 1189–1208), 2:177
- Jin Empire, fall of the (1234)
description of the Jin Empire, 2:25
impact on Mongols, 2:26
Jurchen tribesmen, 2:25
Kaifeng, siege of (1233), 2:25, 93–95
Mongol raids of, 2:25
Ogodei Khan, 2:26
overview of, 2:25–27
Subedei, 2:26
Zhongdu, 2:26, 211, 212
- Jingim (1243–1286), 1:44, 137
- Jochi (d. 1225)
animosity between Chagatai and Jochi, 1:163
father of, 1:162
Jochid Ulus, 1:163
Khwarazmian campaign, 1:162, 163
marriages of, 1:163
as military commander, 1:162–163
name of, 1:162

- Ogodei and, 1:163
 overview of, 1:162–164
 sons of, 1:163
 at Urgench, 1:163
- Jochi Qasar, 1:140, 2:7, 52
- Jochid Ulus, 2:186
- John II Comnenus, 2:171
- John of Monte Corvino, 1:205
- John of Plano Carpini, journey of (1180–1252)
 departure date, 2:27
 description of the Mongol armor (1240s),
 2:226–227
 description of the Mongols (1240s),
 2:225–226
- Guyuk and, 2:28
 lamentations of, 2:28
 letter from Guyuk Khan to Pope Innocent
 IV, image of, 2:28
 military affairs, 2:29, 68
 mission of, 1:204, 2:2, 27
 on *onggon*, 2:145
 overview of, 2:27–29
 selection of, 2:27
 significance of, 2:28, 29
 on *tenggeri*, 2:153
 view of non-Christians, 2:29
*Ystoria Mongalorum (History of the
 Mongols)*, 2:27
- John of Sarrasin, 2:227
- Joscelin II of Edessa, 2:171
- Jurchedei and Chinggis Khan, 2:40
- Jurchen
 Aizong Wanyan Shouxu, 1:213
 alternative name for, 1:212
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:213
 distribution of, 1:213
 divide and rule policy of, 1:213
 groupings of, 1:212
 Jin Empire and, 2:176, 178–179
 language of, 1:212
 Liao-Jin struggle, 1:212
 location of, 1:212
 military system of, 1:213
 Mongol-Song joint military operation, 1:213
 overview of, 1:197, 212–213
 the raw and the cooked, 2:178
 Song Empire and, 2:196
 tribes of, 1:214
- Wanyans and, 1:212
 war against the Song dynasty, 1:213
- Juyin*
 allegiance of, 1:214–215
 armies, 2:113
 changes in, 1:214
 Chinggis Khan, 1:214, 215
 definition of, 1:214
 Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), 1:214
 the Onggud, 1:214, 236
 overview of, 1:197, 214–215
 purpose of, 1:214
 rebellion by the *juyin* tribes, 1:214
 Tatars, 1:214
- Juzjani, 2:218–219
- Kaffa in the Crimea, 2:9–10, 257
- Kaifeng, siege of (1233)
 effect of, 2:95
 location of, 2:94
 overview of, 2:93–95
 precipitating events, 2:93–94
 siege engineers, 2:63
 Song alliance, 2:94
 Subedei and, 2:94–95
 Zhongdu, destruction of, 2:94
- Kaixi War (1205–1208), 2:196
- Kalka River, Battle of the (1223)
 consequences of, 2:97
 description of, 2:96–97
 Jebe (Jirqoʻadai), 2:95
 Mstislavich, Mstislav, 2:96, 97
 overview of, 2:95–97
 precipitating events, 2:96
 Romanovich, Mstislav, 2:97
 Russian survivors of, 2:97
 significance of, 2:95
 Subedei, 2:95, 109
- Kammala, 1:44
- Kara Khitai (1125–1218)
 Atsiz, 2:180
 Battle of Khujand, 2:180
 Battle of Qatwan, 2:180
 “black” Khitai, 2:181
 date created, 2:179
 decline of, 2:181
 establishment of, 2:179
 Guchulug and, 2:181

- Guchulug and the Naiman, 2:162
gur-khan, 2:179–180
 influence of, 2:180
 Khwarazmian Empire and, 2:182
 Liao dynasty, 2:179
 Mawarannahr, 2:180
 Muslims and, 2:180–181
 mystery of the name, 2:181
 Nestorian Christianity, 1:228
 overview of, 2:161, 162, 179–182
 Qarakhanid, 2:180
 religiosity of, 2:180
 religious tolerance, 2:180
 Sanjar, Sultan, 2:180
 Uyghuristan, 2:91
 Uyghurs and, 1:253
 Western Liao Empire, 2:176
 Yelu Dashi, 2:179–180
- Karabalghasun, 1:252
- Karachi beg*
 alternative name for, 1:77
 antecedents to, 1:78
 Atwood, Christopher, on, 1:78
bash karachi, or *beylerbeyi*, 1:78
 as a conservative element within the Crimean Khanate, 1:78
 definition of, 1:77
 influence of, 1:78
 leading *karachi begs* of the Crimean Khanate, 1:77
 origins of, 1:78
 others having influence over the khan, 1:79
 overview of, 1:77–79
 Saʿadat Giray Khan, 1:78
 Sahib Giray, 1:78–79
 the term *qarachu* (*karachi*), 1:78
- Karakalpakstan, 1:255
- Karakorum
 commercial districts, 1:18–19
 decline of, 1:19
 location of, 1:17
 Ogodei's commercial policy, 1:19
 Orkhon River Basin, 1:17
 Orkhon River Valley, photograph of, 1:17
 overview of, 1:2, 17–20
 use of, 1:18
 William of Rubruck on, 1:18
- Karamzin, N. M., 2:50
- Kay-Khusraw I, 2:199
 Kay-Khusraw II, 2:199
 Kay-Qubadh I (1220–1237), 2:199
 Kazghan, 1:86
 Kebek Khan (1319–1327), 1:86
 Kebek Khan (r. 1320–1327), 2:48
- Kereit
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:216
 conversion of Sariq Khan, 1:216
 location of, 1:215–216
 Naiman, 1:216
 Nestorian Christians and, 1:215
 overview of, 1:193–194, 215–217
 Qurjaqus, 1:216
 raids of, 1:216
 Sariq Khan, 1:216
 success of, 1:216
 Temujin, 1:216
 ToghriI, 1:216
 Yeusgei, 1:216
- Kertnagara (King), 2:92, 93
- Keshik* (bodyguard)
 benefits of, 1:80
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:79, 80, 81
 divisions of, 1:80–81
 founding of, 1:80
 government structure and, 1:9
 guarding the khan, 1:80
 hostages, 1:80
 number of, 1:79
 origin of, 1:79
 overview of, 1:79–81
quriltai of 1206 and, 2:40
 recruitment methods, 1:80
 size of, 1:81
 tasks of, 1:79–80
 as a training school for the Mongol Army, 1:80
- Ket Buqa
 against the Assassins, 1:155–156
 at Ayn Jalut, 1:156, 2:71
 Baghdad, siege of (1258), 2:73, 74
 Damascus, capture of, 1:156
 as a Naiman, 1:228
tumen of, 2:70
- Key events
 Alan Goa and the arrow parable, 2:4–6
 Baljuna Covenant (1203), 2:6–8

- Black Death (mid-14th century), 2:8–11
- Chinggis Exchange, 2:11–13
- Chinggis Khan, death of (1227), 2:13–15
- crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249), 2:16–18
- Europe, invasion of (1240–1241), 2:18–20
- Hethum, King of Cilicia (r. 1226–1269), submission of, 2:20–22
- Japan, invasion of (1274, 1280), 2:22–25
- Jin Empire, fall of the (1234), 2:25–27
- John of Plano Carpini, journey of (1180–1252), 2:27–29
- Kulikovo Pole, Battle of (1380), 2:29–32
- Mongol conversion to Islam, 2:32–35
- Nirū'un, Durlukin, and social structure, 2:6
- Otrar Massacre (1218), 2:35–37
- overview essay, 2:1–4
- Peace of Qatwan (1267), 2:37–39
- Rabban Sawma, mission of (1286–1288), 2:41–44
- Red Turban Revolt (1340s–1368), 2:44–46
- Shiremun's Coup (1250), 2:46–48
- Tarmashirin, overthrow of (1334), 2:48–50
- Tatar Yoke, 2:50–52
- Teb Tenggeri, death of (1206), 2:52–54
- Toluid Revolution (1250), 2:54–56
- William of Rubruck, journey of (1253–1255), 2:56–57
- Yesugei, death of (ca. 1174/1175), 2:58–60
- Key places
- Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258), 2:164–167
- Antioch, Principality of, 2:167–174
- Delhi Sultanate, 2:174–176
- Jin Empire (1125–1234), 2:161, 176–179
- Kara Khitai (1125–1218), 2:161, 162, 179–182
- Khwarazmian Empire (1097–1224), 2:162, 163, 182–184
- Kipchak steppes, 2:162, 184–186
- Koryo (935–1392), 2:163, 187–188
- Lithuania, 2:164, 189–190
- Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517), 2:164, 191–192
- overview essay, 2:161–164
- Samarkand, 2:193–195
- Song Empire (960–1279), 2:163, 195–197
- Sultanate of Rum, 2:197–200
- Transcaucasia, 2:163
- Trebizond, 2:163, 200–202
- Uyghuristan, 2:161, 202–204
- Xi Xia (1038–1227), 2:161, 204–206
- Xiangyang, siege of (1267–1273), 2:163, 206–208
- Yunnan, 2:163, 208–210
- Zhongdu, 2:162, 210–213
- Khalji dynasty, 2:175
- Khanate of the Great Khan, 1:xx
- Khidan jun* (Khitan Army), 2:82
- Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan)
- Abaoji (r. 907–927), 1:217–218
- Aguda (1068–1123), 1:219
- assimilation of, 1:219
- Chinggis Khan, 1:219
- Deguang (927–947), 1:218
- Khubilai Khan, 1:219
- language, rise and fall of, 1:220
- the Liao, 1:219
- origin of, 1:217
- overview of, 1:195, 217–220
- “A Rest-Stop for the Khitan Khan” (image), 1:218
- Song war, 1:218
- Yelu Dashi, 1:219
- Khitan Liao dynasty (907–1125), 2:195
- Khitan Xiao Chala, 2:82
- Khitan Yelu Chucai, 1:84
- Khubilai, 1:3, 22, 23
- Khubilai, Prince, 2:209
- Khubilai becomes khan (May 5, 1260)
- Alghu, 1:21
- Ariq Boke, 1:20, 21
- Chinese support, 1:21
- death of Mongke Khan, 1:20
- interception of supplies, 1:21
- overview of, 1:3, 20–22
- Polo, Marco, 1:20
- yasa* and, 1:58
- Khubilai Khan (1215–1294)
- administration of his empire, 1:165–166
- Ariq Boke, 1:71, 115, 164
- Battle of Kediri, 1:165
- Blue Horde, 1:70
- brothers of, 1:164
- calendar, 2:126
- capitals of, 1:3
- Chagatai Khanate and, 1:3

- conquest of southern China and the Song dynasty, 1:164
 fame of, 1:164, 166
 Golden Horde and, 1:164
 heaven and, 2:154
 Il-Khanate and, 1:164
 image of, 1:165
 invasions of, 1:165
 Japan, invasion of (1274, 1280), 2:23–24
 Java, invasion of (1292–1293), 2:91–92, 93
 Java, submission of, 1:165
 Karakorum, 1:3, 38
 Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan), 1:219
 Koryo (935–1392), 2:187, 188
 Mongol Empire of, 1:164
 Mubarak Shah and, 1:71
ordos, 1:93
 ortoqs and, 1:239
 overseas ventures, 1:165
 overview of, 1:164–166
 parents of, 1:164
 Qaidu, 1:164–165
 Qonichi, 1:70
quriltai, 1:3
 Shangdu, 1:37, 38
 Siktur and, 1:95
 Song Empire (960–1279), 2:196
 writing systems, 1:64, 109
yam (jam) system, 1:111
 Yuan dynasty, 2:44
 Yuan Empire and, 1:115–116
 Yuan Empire reforms, 1:31
- Khurasan**
 Abaqa and, 1:82
 Baraq and, 1:82
 civil government of, 1:82
 as a contested frontier, 1:82
 as a fertile ground for rebellion, 1:83
 Greater Khurasan, 1:81
 importance of, 1:83
 invasions of, 1:82–83
 Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah, 1:81, 82
 Khwarazmian Empire and, 1:81–82
 location of, 1:81
 overview of, 1:81–83
 significance of, 1:81
 Tolu's campaign in, 1:82
 as a training ground for princes, 1:82, 83
- Khwarazmian Empire (1097–1224)**
 Anushtigin Gharchai, 2:181
 Arslan Atsiz Khwarazmshah (r. 1127–1156), 2:182
 Atsiz, 2:182
 destruction of, 2:35
 Jalal al-Din, 2:183
 Kara Khitai, 2:182
 Khurasan and, 1:181–182
 Khwarazm region, 2:182
 Khwarazmians, 2:35, 181
 Kipchak tribes, 2:182
 Mongol invasion of, 2:162–163, 183
 Muhammad II Khwarazmshah (r. 1200–1220), 2:183
 Otrar Massacre and, 2:183
 overview of, 2:162, 163, 182–184
 Seljuk Sultan Sanjar (r. 1118–1153), 2:182, 183
 significance of, 2:61, 163
 Urgench, capital of, 2:181
- Khwarazmshahs**, 2:142, 182–183
- Kill zones**, 2:111
- King Bela IV (1235–1270)**, 2:19
- King Philip IV (1285–1314)**, 2:43
- King Vaclav I (1230–1253)**, 2:18
- Kingdom of Jerusalem**, 2:16
- Kipchak steppes**
 alternative names for, 2:184
 Avars (558–796), 2:184
 commercial activities in, 2:186
 destabilization of, 2:186
 Gok Turk Empire (568–630), 2:184
 Golden Horde and, 2:186
 Huns (ca. 395–500 CE), 2:184
 Jochid Ulus, 2:186
 Kipchak Khanate, 2:186
 the Kipchaks, 2:184
 Kipchaks, first migrations of, 2:185
 location of, 2:184
 Mongols and, 2:185–186
 overview of, 2:162, 184–186
 photograph of, 2:185
 Qanglis, 2:184
 Scythians (ca. 1200 BCE–300 CE), 2:184
 Second Turkic Empire (682–731), 2:184
 supratribal/confederation zones, 2:185
 Timur-i Leng and, 2:186

Kipchaks

- the Alans and, 1:197, 2:96
- confederations of, 1:221
- as Mamluks, 1:196
- marriage alliances, 1:221
- military alliances, 1:221
- Mongol's defeat of, 1:222, 2:96–97
- names for, 1:220
- origin of, 1:220–221
- overview of, 1:194–195, 220–222
- religions of, 1:221–222
- Robert of Clari's description of the Kipchaks (ca. 1205), 2:218
- the Rus' and, 1:221
- shamanism, 1:221
- Kitab al-Qanun fi-Tibb* (Canon of Medicine) of Ibn Sina (d. 1037), 2:156
- Knights Hospitaller, 2:172, 173
- Knights Templars, 2:101, 173, 174
- Ko'agchin, 1:140
- Koke Mongke Tenggeri (Blue Eternal Sky), 2:122
- Konchog Gyalpo (1034–1102), 1:240
- Korea, 2:24, 163
- Korean Buddhism, 2:187
- Korghuz, 1:237
- Korguz, 1:102
- Koryo (935–1392)
 - cartography, 2:188
 - distillation, 2:188
 - foreign invasions, 2:187
 - Khubilai Khan and, 2:187, 188
 - Korea and, 2:187
 - Korean Buddhism, 2:187
 - Korean girls, 2:187
 - Korean national dress, 2:188
 - Mongol food influences, 2:188
 - Mongol invasion of, 2:187
 - Mongol rule in Korea, 2:187–188
 - overview of, 2:163, 187–188
 - the *yangban* (Korean civilian elite), 2:187
 - Yuan dynasty and, 2:187
- Kose Dagh, Battle of (1243)
 - consequences of, 2:97, 98, 99
 - description of, 2:98
 - Giyath al-Din Kaykhusraw, 2:98
 - overview of, 2:97–99
 - Seljuk Sultanate of Rum and, 2:97, 98

Koten Khan

- alliances with the Russians, 2:96
- conversion to Buddhism, 1:241
- illness of, 1:11
- murder of, 2:103, 104
- Ogodei Khan and, 1:11, 172
- Kulikovo Pole, Battle of (1380)
 - Andreevich, Vladimir, 2:30
 - Ivanovich, Dmitri, 2:29–30, 31
 - Mamai, 2:29, 30–31
 - Muscovy, liberation of, 2:31
 - overview of, 2:29–32
 - Toqtamysh (d. 1406), 2:30–31
- Kumiss
 - as a cure-all, 2:139
 - current consumption of, 2:139
 - definition of, 2:137
 - the drinking fountain, 2:139
 - fermentation of, 2:137
 - health benefits, 2:139
 - overview of, 2:121, 137–140
 - photograph of, 2:138
 - production of, 2:138, 139
 - sharing of, 2:138
 - uses of, 2:137–138
 - William of Rubruck on, 2:138, 139
- Kupalak, 1:70
- La flor des estoires de la terre d'Orient* (The Flower of Histories of the Land of the East), 2:66
- Language, rise and fall of, 1:220
- Latter Tang (923–935), 1:235
- Leather, 2:131
- Leon II of Cilicia, 2:173
- Leon of Cilicia (r. 1269–1289), 2:21
- Les Chetifs*, 2:171
- Li Bingzhong, 1:4
- Li Tan, 2:82
- Li Yuanhao, 2:205
- Liao dynasty, 2:179
- Liao Empire (965–1125), 1:195
- Liegnitz, Battle of (1241)
 - Baidar and, 2:100
 - Baidar and Orda, 2:100, 101
 - combatants in, 2:99
 - consequences of, 2:102
 - description of, 2:101–102

- Henry II of Silesia, forces of, 2:101
 illustration of, 2:100
 miners on the move, 2:102
 overview of, 2:99–102
 precipitating events, 2:100
 Teutonic Knights, 2:101
- Lithuania
 Catholicism, 2:189
 expansion of, 2:189, 190
 foundations for Lithuania's rise, 2:189
 Gediminas (r. 1315–1341/1342), 2:190
 Golden Horde and, 2:189, 164, 190
 Grand Duchy of Lithuania, 2:189
 Kiev, 2:189, 190
 Mindaugas (r. 1238–1263), 2:189
modus vivendi of, 2:190
 overview of, 2:164, 189–190
 Polotsk, 2:189
 Teutonic Knights, 2:190
 Traidenis (r. 1270–1282), 2:189
 Vytenis (r. 1295–1315), 2:189
- Lithuanian Tatars, 1:192
- Lodi dynasty (1451–1526), 2:176
- Lombard expedition in the Crusade of 1101, 2:169
- Lord of Fire, *onggon* of the, 2:146
- Louis IX (King) of France, 2:56, 233–234, 236
- Magas, 1:197
- Magas, destruction of, 1:198
- Mahmud Yalavach (d. ca. 1262)
 Bujir and, 1:84
 conclusion concerning, 1:85
 death of, 1:84
 importance of, 1:13, 62, 83
 as *jarquchi*, 1:84
 as a Muslim, 1:13, 14
 name of, 1:83
 overview of, 1:13, 83–85
 praise for, 1:84
 reforms of, 1:100
 taxation system and, 1:11, 100
- Maitreya Buddha, 1:256
- Majd al-Mulk, 1:125
- Malik Oghul, 1:12
- Mamai, 1:74, 2:29, 30–31
- Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)
 Al Salih Ayyubi (r. 1240–1249), 2:191
 alliance with the Golden Horde, 2:191–192
 authority of, 2:191
 the Bahriyya, 2:191
 border of, 2:191
 creation of, 1:223
 dissolution of, 2:192
 King Louis (r. 1226–1270), 2:191
 overview of, 2:164, 191–192
 Qutuz, 2:191
 regicide, 2:192
 slaves from the Mongol conquest, 2:191
- Mamluks
 at Acre, 1:224
 Army, 1:224
 Battle of Ayn Jalut, 1:223, 2:70–72
 Battle of La Forbie, 1:223
 Baybars I (1223–1277), 1:131, 224
 cavalry of, 1:223
 against the crusaders, 1:224
 defeat by Selim the Grim, 1:224
 definition of, 1:131, 222
 ending of the institution, 1:225
 Islam and, 1:222
 Kipchaks as, 1:196
 Mamluk (slave) institution, 1:222
 Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517), 1:223
 martial prowess of, 1:224
 against the Mongols, 1:224
 Muhammad Ali and, 1:225
 Mutasim and, 1:223
 overview of, 1:194, 222–225
 as part of the Ottoman Empire, 1:225
 as a praetorian guard, 1:223
 purchase of, 1:222
 purpose of, 1:222
 Qutuz, 1:223–224
 Seventh Crusade, 1:223
 slavery and, 1:222
- Manglai* and *gejige*, 2:66
- Manichaeism, 1:252
- Manuel I Comnenus, 2:171, 172
- Maps
 Asian in 1334, 1:xxii
 Eurasia before the rise of the Mongol Empire (1206), 1:xvi
 Mongol world, ca. 1260, 1:xx
 Timur's Empire, ca. 1405, 1:xxiii
 travels of Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta, 1:xxi

- Mar Denha, 2:42
- Mar Yaballaha, 1:175, 2:42
- Mar Yahba Allah (1245–1317), 2:255–256
- Markos (1245–1317), 2:41–42, 238
- Mas'ud Beg, 2:37–36
- Maurice of Porto, 2:169
- Mawarannahr
- acquisition of, 1:86
 - alternative name for, 1:85
 - as center of warfare, 1:86
 - Chagatai Khan and, 1:86
 - Chagatai Khanate and, 1:86
 - Chagatayids and, 1:86
 - Chin-Temur, 1:86
 - definition of, 1:85
 - description by Yelu Chucai, 2:224
 - Il-Khanid invasion of 1270, 1:86
 - importance of, 2:49
 - Kazghan, 1:86
 - Kebek Khan (1319–1327), 1:86
 - location of, 1:85
 - Otrar Massacre (1218), 1:86, 2:183
 - overview of, 1:85–87
 - Qaidu, 1:86
 - Tughluk Temur Khan, 1:86
- Mawlawiyah *tariqa*, 1:246
- Medical exchanges, 2:12
- Medicine
- Arabic medicine, 2:141
 - Bi-chi, 2:140
 - Chinese medicine, 2:141
 - Chinggis Khan and, 2:140
 - dietary medicine of the Mongol court, 2:140
 - dissection, 2:141
 - Greek medicine, 2:141
 - herbal medicine, 2:140
 - Huihui yaofang* (Muslim Medicinal Recipes), 2:141
 - Isa the translator (d. early 14th century), 2:141
 - overview of, 2:123, 142–144
 - Tanksuq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'ulum-i khitay* (Treasure Book of the Il-Khans on the Sciences and Learning of China), 2:140–141
 - Tibetan medical practitioners, 2:140
 - Yinshan zhengyao* (proper and essential things for the emperor's food and drink) (1330), 2:140
- Mehmet I, 2:67
- Merkit
- alliance with the Naiman, 1:226
 - at the Battle of Chakirmaut, 1:226
 - at the Battle of the Irtysh River, 1:226
 - Bayan, 1:227
 - Borte kidnapping, 1:226
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:225, 226
 - Dayir Usun, 1:227
 - defeat at the Ulagh Tagh, 2:80
 - first mention of, 1:225
 - as the Gurvan Merkit (Three Merkit), 1:225
 - Hoelun, 1:225
 - Kara Khitai, hostility toward, 1:225
 - Nestorian Christianity, 1:225
 - Oghul Qaimish, 1:226
 - overview of, 1:194, 225–227
 - Qulan Khatun, 1:226–227
 - rules for marriage, 1:226
 - submission of, 1:226
 - Temujin and, 1:226
 - territory of, 1:225
 - Toluid Revolution, 1:226
 - Toqtoa Beki, 1:226
 - Yesugei and, 1:225
- Methods of slaughtering animals, 1:211
- Me'ujin Se'ultu, 1:250
- Military
- alginchin*, 2:62, 64–66
 - Ankara, Battle of (1402), 2:67–68
 - armament, manufacturing of, 2:63
 - armor, 2:68–70
 - Ayn Jalut, Battle of (1260), 2:70–72
 - Baghdad, siege of (1258), 2:63, 72–75
 - battle tactics and strategies, 2:61–62
 - Caizhou, siege of (1233–1234), 2:75–77
 - cannon, 2:77–79
 - Chakirmaut, Battle of (1204), 2:79–81
 - cherik* troops, 2:81–83
 - cheriks*, 2:62
 - Chinggis Khan and, 2:61–62
 - contagious diseases, 2:61
 - counterweight trebuchets, 2:63, 106, 114, 115, 208, 237
 - formations of the Mongols, 2:80
 - gejige* (follow up), 2:66
 - gunpowder, 2:63–64, 87–89
 - Irtysh River, Battle of the (1209), 2:89–91

- Java, invasion of (1292–1293), 2:91–93
 Kaifeng, siege of (1233), 2:93–95
 Kalka River, Battle of the (1223), 2:95–97
 Kose Dagh, Battle of (1243), 2:97–99
 Liegnitz, Battle of (1241), 2:99–102
manglai (lit. “forehead”), 2:66
 Mohi, Battle of (April 1241), 2:102–105
 Muscovy, 2:64
 overview essay, 2:61–64
 siege warfare, 2:61, 63, 105–107
 study of Mongol military, 2:64
 Subedei (1176–1248), 2:107–110
 Syrian defeat of the Mongols, 2:71, 72
 tactics, 2:110–111
 tanma, 2:62, 112–113
 tanmachi, 2:62, 65–66, 113
 trebuchet, 2:63, 114–116
 tsunami strategy, 2:63, 116–118
 weapon technology, 2:61, 63–64
 weapons, 2:118–120
 See also Battle
- Mindaugas (r. 1238–1263), 2:189
 Ming dynasty, 2:45
Mingan, 1:6, 105
 Miniature paintings, 1:77
 Mi-nyag, 1:247
Mithqal, 2:144
Mochalga, 1:31
 Moge Khatun, 1:10
 Mogetuken, 1:139
 Moghul Empire (1526–1857), 1:89
 Moghulistan
 borders of, 1:88
 Chagatayid khans and, 1:88
 Chagatayids and, 1:88
 civil war between Ariq Boke and Khubilai Khan, 1:88
 Islam, 1:88
 location of, 1:87–88
 Moghul Empire and, 1:89
 overview of, 1:87–89
 religions in, 1:88
 Tarmashirin, overthrow of, 2:49
 territory of, 1:88
 Timur-i Leng, 1:89
 translation of name, 1:87
 Turkestan, 1:87
 Mohi, Battle of (April 1241)
 alternative name for, 2:102
 Batu and Subedei, 2:103–104
 Bela IV (r. 1235–1270), 2:103
 description of, 2:103–104
 effect on Hungary, 2:104
 overview of, 2:102–105
- Money
 booty, 2:142
 coinage, 2:142, 143–144
 conquest monies, 2:142
 customs duties, 2:143
 forms of, 2:142–143
 gold and, 2:144
 mithqal, 2:144
 monetization of the Mongol Empire, 2:144
 Mongke and, 2:143
 overview of, 2:122, 142–144
 photograph of gold coin with names of Chinggis Khan and Samarkand, 2:143
 poll tax, 2:143
 silver and, 2:122, 144
 silver ingots, 2:143
 styles of, 2:143–144
 tamghas, 2:144
 taxes, 2:143
 trade tax, 2:143
- Mongke Khan (1209–1259, r. 1251–1259)
 accomplishments of, 1:166
 Baya’ujin, 1:168
 characteristics of, 1:167
 death of, 1:20, 23, 168
 description of William of Rubruck’s audience with (May 31, 1254), 2:234–235
 Il-Khanate, 1:74
 image of, 1:167
 individuals, 1:30
 invasions of, 1:168
 Kuitani, 1:168
 letter to King Louis IX of France (1250s), 2:233–234
 military career of, 1:167
 name, meaning of, 1:166
 Oghul Qaimish, 1:167
 Oghul Qoymish, 1:168
 Ogodei and, 1:166–67
 ortoq (*ortaq*, *ortagh*) and, 1:239
 overview of, 1:xviii–xix, 166–169

- Qutuqtai Khatun, 1:168
 reforms of, 1:167
 Song Empire (960–1279), 2:196
 sons of, 1:168
 Temuge Otchigin, 1:12
 Toluid Revolution (1250), 1:3, 55, 115, 166, 167
 unification of Mongols, 1:22
 William of Rubruck on, 1:118, 168
 Mongke Koke Tenggeri, 2:2
 Mongke Temur (1266–1279), 1:27, 74
 Mongol archer on horseback, painting of, 2:136
 Mongol composite bow, 2:89, 118, 119
The Mongol Conquests in World History (May), 2:11
 Mongol conversion to Islam
 Abu Said (r. 1317–1335), 2:34
 Ahmad Teguder (r. 1282–1284), 2:33
 Ananda (Prince), 2:33
 Berke Khan (r. 1257–1266) and, 2:32
 Ghazan Khan's (r. 1295–1304), 2:33, 255
 Ghazan Khan's (r. 1295–1304) conversion to Islam, image of, 2:34
 in the Il-Khanate, 2:33
 Islamized Turkic populations and, 2:32
 Mubarak Shah, 2:33
 Muslim communities in China, 2:33
 Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), 2:33
 overview of, 2:32–35
 process of Islamization, 2:32, 34, 255
 Rabban Sawma's account of the meeting of Oljeitu and Mar Yahba Allah (1304), 2:255–256
 Tarmashirin conversion, 2:48, 49
 Tode Mongke (r. 1280–1287), 2:32
 Mongol court culture, 2:11
 Mongol Empire, dissolution of (1216)
 Ariq Boke, 1:22, 23
 Berke, 1:22
 civil war between Ariq Boke and Khubilai, 1:22
 Hulegu, 1:22, 23
 Khubilai, 1:22, 23
 Mongke Khan, death of, 1:22, 23
 overview of, 1:3, 22–24
 Mongol Empire, influence of, 1:xxii
 Mongol Empire, rise of, 1:xv–xvi
 Mongol invasion of Islamic world, Ibn al-Athir on, 2:215–216
 Mongol invasion of Japan, 2:187–188
 Mongol invasions of the Near East, Ibn al-Athir on, 2:216–217
 Mongol khatuns (queens), 1:122–123
 Mongol-Jin War (1211–1234), 2:75, 76
 Mongol-Oirat rivalry, 1:27
 Mstislavich, Mstislav, 2:96, 97
 Mubarak Shah (d. 1266), 1:71, 177, 2:33
 Mubarakh Khoja (d. 1368), 1:70
 Muhammad ibn Tughluq, 2:175
 Muhammad II Khwarazmshah (r. 1200–1220), 2:183
 Muhammad Shaybani, Khan of the Uzbeks (1500–1510), 1:254–255
 Muqali (1170–1223)
 death of, 2:206
 Four Heroes and, 1:90
 overview of, 1:61, 90–92
 tanma, 2:65
 tanmachi or *tammachi*, 1:97–98
 Xi Xia, 2:206
 Muscovy, liberation of, 2:31, 258
 Muscovy military, 2:64
 Muslim Astronomy Bureau (Huihui sitian jian), 2:126
 Muslims
 Abbasid Caliphate, 2:164, 165
 the Assassins, 1:155, 196, 200
 Berke and, 1:xix, 2:32
 Buyid family and, 2:166
 Chagatai and, 1:58
 in China, 1:2, 13–14
 Doquz Khatun and, 1:146
 effects of forced migration of, 1:14
 Guyuk and, 1:152
 Hulegu and, 1:157
 il-khans and, 2:33
 Jerusalem, 2:16
 Kara Kitai rule of, 2:180
 methods of slaughtering animals, 1:211
 Mongol reliance on Muslim, 1:13–14, 2:105
 Nizari Ismailis, 1:155
 ortoq, 1:237
 religious toleration, 1:2
 strife between Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims, 2:72

- Sufis, 1:54, 244–247
troop migration, 2:209
Turkic Muslims, 1:158
Uzbek Khan and, 1:53
Uzbeks and, 1:254
in the Yuan Empire, 2:3
Yunnan Province and, 2:210
- Mustansir (1226–1242), 2:72, 166
Mustasim ibn Mustansir, 1:223, 2:72, 74
Myriarchies, 1:105
- Naiman
Battle of Chakirmaut (1204), 2:79–80
Battle of the Irtysh River (1209), 1:228
confederations of, 1:227
current status of, 1:228
defeat at the Ulagh Tagh, 2:80
definition of, 1:227
Forest People and, 1:227
Guchulug, 1:228
Inancha Bilge Khan, 1:227
Jin Empire and, 1:228
Kara Khitai, 1:228
Kereit and, 1:216
Ket Buqa, 1:228
literacy of, 1:228
Nestorian Christianity, 1:228
as the Nianbage or Nianbaen, 1:227
overview of, 1:194, 196, 227–229
Tatar-Tong'a, 1:228
Tayang Khan (d. 1204), 1:227
territory of, 1:227
Toghril and, 1:227–228
view of the Mongols, 1:228
Yeke Monggol Ulus, 1:228
- Naptha, 2:88, 106
Nerge maneuver, 2:110
Nestorian Alans, 1:205
Nestorian Christians
Catholicism and, 1:231
in Central Asia, 1:230
in China, 1:2, 14, 230
as the Church of the East, 1:229
Council of Ephesus, 1:229, 230
disappearance of, 1:231
Doquz Khatun (d. 1265), 1:146, 147
first half of the Il-Khanate, 1:231
Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), 1:150
Guyuk and, 1:152
on Jesus, 1:230
Karakorum and, 1:19
the Kereit, 1:215
in medieval Mongolia, 1:35
the Merkit, 1:225
in Mongolia, 1:230
the Naiman, 1:228
Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople
(386–451), 1:229
Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), 1:174–175
Onggud, 1:237
overview of, 1:196, 229–231
persecution of, 1:230
photograph of the Church of Mary in
Ephesus, 1:229
Rabban Sawma, 1:230
religious toleration, 1:2
Sasanid Empire (224–651) and, 1:230
Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252), 1:185
Turkic tribes and, 1:14
on the Virgin Mary, 1:230
Yahbh-Allah III, 1:230
- Nestorianism, 1:230
Nevsky, Alexander, 2:51, 228
New Sarai, 1:2, 34
Nicaea, 2:99
Nicholas IV (Pope), 2:43
Nikonian Chronicle, 2:228, 258
Niru'un, Durlukin, and social structure,
2:6
Niru'un tribes, 2:5
Nizam al-Mulk, assassination of, 1:200–201
Nizari Ismailis
as the Assassins, 1:155, 196
Hulegu and, 1:75, 155
overview of, 1:201
Shia Islam and, 1:199
Sunni Muslim polemicists on, 1:200
- Nogai (d. 1299)
Golden Horde, 1:74
Il-Khanate and, 1:24
importance of, 1:24
independence of, 1:24
as kingmaker, 1:4
the Noghai Horde, 1:25
overview of, 1:24–26
Tele Buqa and, 1:24

- Tode-Mongke, 1:24
Toqta and, 1:24–25
Noqai kereI (feigned retreat), 2:111
Northern Yuan (1368–1634)
 Arugtai of the Asud, 1:27
 Ayushiridara, 1:26
 Batu-Mongke Dayan Khan, 1:27–28
 Buddhism, second conversion to, 1:28
 collapse of the Northern Yuan dynasty, 1:28
 Dayan divides his empire, 1:26
 Esen Taishi, 1:27
 Mongol-Oirat rivalry, 1:27
 Oirat influence on, 1:27
 overview of, 1:26–29
 succession order of the early Northern Yuan khans, 1:27
 successive Oirat chiefs, 1:27
 Toghan-Temur, 1:26, 27
 Toghoon, 1:27
 Yisuder, 1:27
Nowruz, 1:149
Nur al-Din, 2:171, 172
Nuzhi jun (Jurchen Army), 2:82
- Objects and artifacts
 animal products, 2:122
 calendar, 2:124–127
 clothes, 2:122, 127–130
 coinage, 2:122
 felt, 2:121, 122
 the Five Snouts, 2:121, 130–132
 food, 2:123
 goats, 2:122
 Great Wall of China, 2:124, 132–134
 the horse, 2:121, 135–137
 intellectual achievement, 2:123–124
 Jami'at al-Tawarikh (Compendium of Chronicles), 1:148, 2:123
 kumiss, 2:137–140
 medicine, 2:123, 140–142
 money, 2:122, 142–144
 onggon, 2:122–123, 144–146
 overview essay, 2:121–124
 pasta, 2:123, 146–148
 religion, 2:122
 The Secret History of the Mongols, 2:123–124, 148–150
 sheep, 2:121
- Shengwu qinzheng lu* (The Campaigns of the Holy Warrior), 2:124, 150–152
tenggeri, 2:122, 152–155
Yinshan zhengyao (proper and essential things for the emperor's food and drink) (1330), 2:123, 140, 147, 155–157
yurt (*ger*), 2:121–122, 157–159
- Oboqs*, 1:104
Oghul Qaimish Khatun (d. 1251)
 arrest of, 1:167
 criticism of, 1:169, 226
 defamation of, 1:169
 execution of, 1:169
 failures of, 1:169, 170
 gift-giving practices, 1:170
 Guyuk and, 1:52, 150, 169, 173
 line of succession and, 1:170
 merchant activity and, 1:169–170
 overview of, 1:xviii, 169–171
 sons of, 1:169
 Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252) and, 1:170
 Toluid Revolution (1250), 1:54, 55
 William of Rubruck on, 1:169
 witchcraft and, 1:169, 170
 witchcraft trials, 1:170
- Oghul Qoymish, 1:168
Ogodei Khan (1186–1241)
 accomplishments of, 1:171, 172
 alcoholism and, 1:172
 biography of, 1:121
 commercial policy of, 1:19
 expansion of the Mongol Empire, 1:172
 Golden Horde, 1:73
 ideology of world conquest, 1:171
 image of, 1:172
 as Kha'an or Qa'an, 1:47
 Khwarazmian Empire, conquest of, 1:171–172
 overview of, 1:xvii–xviii, 171–173
 reform of the Mongol Empire, 1:84
 title of, 1:171
 Toregene Khatun, 1:172, 173
 yam (*jam*) system and, 1:110
- Oirat
 Arghun-aqa, 1:232
 assassination of Elbeg Nigulesugchi, 1:232
 Choros Batula Chingsan (d. ca. 1416), 1:232

- current status of, 1:231
 emergence of the Oirat, 1:233
 as “Forest Peoples” (Middle Mongolian
hoi-yin irgen), 1:202, 231, 232
 Jochi, 1:232
 meaning of name, 1:231
 Mongolian Empire and, 1:232
 Oirat script, 1:195
 overview of, 1:194, 231–233
 prestige of, 1:194
 Quduqa Beki, 232
The Secret History of the Mongols, 1:231
 Ugechi Qasaga, 1:232
 uprising of Forest Peoples in 1217–1218,
 1:232
 as Zhunghars, 1:231
See also Forest People
- Old Man of the Mountain, 1:200, 2:252
 Old Man of the Mountain’s fortress, 1:199
- Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316)
 alternative name for, 1:173
 conversion to Islam, 1:122, 2:33–34
 date of birth, 1:173
 full name of, 1:173
 Ghazan and, 1:173
 his patronage of scholars, 1:174, 175
 Il-Khanate and, 1:175
 Islam, conversion to, 1:175
 Mar Yahballah, 1:175
 military expansion and, 1:174
 Nestorian Christians, 1:174–175
 Oljeitu tomb, 1:174
 Oljeitu tomb, photograph of, 1:40
 overview of, 1:173–176
 praise for, 1:173
 Rabban Sawma’s account of the meeting of
 Oljeitu and Mar Yahba Allah (1304),
 2:255–256
 reign of, 1:173–174
 relationship with his subjects, 1:174
 Shiism and, 1:175
 spiritual beliefs of, 1:174
 Uruk Khatun, 1:174
- Ong Khan, 1:94
- Onggirad
 adventures of Hoelun and her children,
 1:234
 alternative name for, 1:233
- Borte, 1:233, 234
 Chabi Khatun, 1:235
 Dei Sechen, 1:234
 importance of, 1:233
 Khubilai Khan and, 1:235
 overview of, 1:194, 233–235
 reorganization of steppe groups, 1:235
 Temujin and, 1:233
 Yesugei, 1:233, 234
- Onggon*
 alternative names for, 2:144
 appearance of, 2:144
 Buriats, 2:145–146
 concept of, 2:145
 cult of, 2:144
 current status of, 2:146
 Darkhad *onggons*, 2:146
 definition of, 2:144
 forms of consecrating *onggons*, 2:145
 John of Plano Carpini on, 2:145
 Mongolian shamanism and, 2:145
onggon of the Lord of Fire, 2:146
 overview of, 2:122–123, 144–146
 Tibetan Buddhism, 2:145
 types of, 2:145
 worship, 2:145–146
- Onggud
 Alaqa-beki, 1:236, 237
 Alaquush Digt Quri, 1:235–236
 alternative name for, 1:235
juyin, 1:214, 236
 Korghuz, 1:237
 meaning of name, 1:235
 the Naiman and, 1:227
 Nestorian Christians, 1:237
 overview of, 1:194, 235–237
 Shatuo and, 1:235
 viticulture, 1:237
- Orda
 challenge to the throne, 1:12
 Guyuk and, 1:151, 153
 Guyuk’s election, 1:11–12
 significance of, 1:69–70, 163
- Ordo* (*ordu*)
amir-ordo, 1:93
 definition of, 1:92
 illustration of, 1:92
 overview of, 1:92–94

- socioeconomic and political relevance
of the *ordos*, 1:92–93
wealth and, 1:93
women and, 1:93–94
- Organization and administration
Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263), 1:64–67
Baiju (d. 1260), 1:42, 67–69
Blue Horde, 1:69–71
Chagatai Khanate, 1:71–73
Golden Horde (Jochid Ulus), 1:73–75
Il-Khanate, 1:75–77
karachi beg, 1:77–79
keshik (bodyguard), 1:79–81
Khurasan, 1:81–83
Mahmud Yalavach (d. ca. 1262),
1:83–85
Mawarannahr, 1:85–87
Moghulistan, 1:87–89
Muqali (1170–1223), 1:90–92
ordo (*ordu*), 1:92–94
overview essay, 1:61–64
Qasar, 1:94–95
tamgha, 1:96–97
tammachi or *tammachi*, 1:97–99
taxation, 1:99–101
transfer of authority, 1:101–103
tribe, 1:103–06
ulus, 1:106–108
writing systems, 1:108–110
yam (*jam*) system, 1:110–112
Yelu Chucai (1189–1243), 1:113–115
Yuan Empire (1265–1368), 1:115–117
Yuan society, 1:117–119
- Orghina Khatun (d. 1261)
Alghu and, 1:177
early life of, 1:176
family connections, 1:176
marriage of, 1:176
Mubarak Shah, 1:177
overview of, 1:123, 176–178
as a political figure in Central Asia,
1:176–177
Qara Hulegu and, 1:176
as regent for Mubarak Shah, 1:71
reign of, 1:177
Yesu-Mongke, execution of, 1:176–177
- Orkhon River Valley, photograph of, 1:17
- Ortoq* (*ortaq*, *ortagh*)
as a commercial partnership, 1:238
contract, 1:238
definition of, 1:237, 238
Khubilai and *ortoqs*, 1:239
literal meaning of, 1:237
Mongke Khan on, 1:239
Mongol government debt and, 1:238
Mongol support of, 1:239
ortoq merchants, 1:239
ortoq relationship, 1:238
overview of, 1:237–240
silver tax in northern China, 1:239
status of *ortoq*, 1:238
usury (*yang-gao-li*), 1:238–239
Uyghurs and, 1:238
- Ortoq* merchants, 1:239
- Ossetians, 1:198–199
- Osterna, Poppo von, 2:101
- Otrar Massacre (1218)
account of, 2:219–220
Ala' al-Din Muhammad II (d. 1220), 2:35, 37
basis of, 2:36
Caliph al-Nasir (r. 1180–1225), 2:166
Chinggis Khan, 2:35, 36
destruction of the Khwarazmian Empire,
2:35
Inalchuq (d. 1219), 2:35–36
Inalchuq, killing of, 2:36
irony in, 2:36
the Khwarazmians, 1:171, 2:35, 183
location of, 1:142, 2:35
Mawarannahr, acquisition of, 1:86, 2:183
overview of, 2:35–37
precipitating events, 2:35–36
response to the massacre of Mongol
merchants, 2:36
siege of Otrar, 2:36
- Paiza*
circular bronze *paizas*, 1:31
description of, 1:29
distribution of, 1:29–30
as the *gerege* in Mongolian, 1:29
Ghazan Khan on, 1:31
illustration of, 1:30
inscription on, 1:29
Jin tablets, 1:29
Khubilai Khan on, 1:31

- military rank and, 1:30
 Mongke and, 1:30
 Mongol Khans on, 1:30
 overview of, 1:29–31
 purpose of, 1:29
 recipients of, 1:29
 use of, 1:29
yam stations and, 1:29
- Paladins, 2:109
- Pan-Turkic identity, 1:255
- Paper money, 2:243
- Paris, Matthew, 2:232
- Parthian shot, 2:111
- Pasta
 definition of, 2:146
 dumplings, 2:147
 durum wheat, 2:146–147
 hanging noodles, 2:147
 hard wheat, 2:147
mantou, 2:148
manty, 2:148
 in the Middle East, 2:147, 148
 overview of, 2:123, 146–148
 pasta imitations, 2:147
 Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324), 2:147, 148
 the term “pasta,” 2:147
Yinshan zhengyao (proper and essential things for the emperor’s food and drink) (1330), 2:147
- The Path and Its Fruits*, 1:241
- Peace of Qatwan (1267)
 Baraq, 2:37–39
 division of Mawannahr, 1:86
 outcome of, 1:181
 overview of, 2:3, 37–39
 parties involved with, 1:72
- Pelliot, Paul, 2:152
- Peng Daya, 2:153
- Persian literary history, 1:77
- Phagspa Lama, 1:109, 241–242
- Phags-pa script
 after the end of the Yuan dynasty, 1:241
 compared with the Uyghur script, 1:109
 as a decorative form, 2:129–130
 overview of, 1:109–110
 Phags-pa documents, 1:109
 significance of, 2:12–13
- Philip of Antioch, 2:173
- Phyagna Dorje, 1:241
- Pneumonic plague, 2:9
- Poland, 2:18–19, 100, 102
- Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324)
 on the Assassins, 1:199, 200, 2:252–253
 book controversy, 1:179–180
 on China’s countryside (1298), 2:241–242
 on Chinese ships (ca. 1300), 2:249–250
 on the city of Daidu (ca. 1300), 2:247–248
 date and place of birth, 1:178
 depiction of his travels, 1:179
 early life of, 1:178
 on the fall of Baghdad (1258), 2:235–236
 family of Marco Polo (1254–1324), 1:207
 father of, 1:178
Il Milione, 1:179
 on Japan, 2:188
 Khubilai Khan and, 1:20, 178
 on Khubilai Khan hunting (ca. 1300), 2:248–249
 on Khubilai Khan hunting park at Shangdu (ca. 1300), 2:251–252
 on Khubilai Khan’s palace (1298), 2:242–243
 as a linguist, 1:178
 on Mongol customs (ca. 1324), 2:256
 on Mongol shamanism (ca. 1300), 2:250–251
 on Mongol warriors in the 13th century (ca. 1300), 2:245–247
 on Nayan’s rebellion against Khubilai Khan (1287), 2:239
 on *onggon*, 2:145
 overview of, 1:178–180
 painting shows Marco Polo sailing from Venice, 1:208
 on paper money in China (ca. 1300), 2:243–245
 pasta, 2:147, 148
 as a prisoner of war, 1:179
 Rusticiano and, 1:179
 sailing from Venice in 1271 (painting), 1:208
 Semuren preference and, 1:9
 on the siege of Xiangyang (1273), 2:237–238
Travels of Marco Polo, 1:166, 178, 179
 on the women of Khubilai Khan (1298), 2:240–241
- Prophet Muhammad (d. 632), 2:164

- Province system of Mongol China, 1:84
 Pulad, 1:25
- Qadan, 2:19
- Qaidu (1230–1301)
 Abaqa and, 1:180–181
 Alghu of the Chagatai Khanate and, 1:86
 alliance with Berke, 1:180
 Ariq Boke, support or, 1:180
 Baraq and, 1:181
 Bayan and, 1:182
 conquests of, 1:181
 death of, 1:182
 Il-Khanate and, 1:181
 influence of, 1:181
 as khan, 1:181
 Khubilai and, 1:181, 182
 overview of, 1:180–183
 Peace of Qatwan (1267), 2:37–39
 Qara Qada, battle at, 1:183
 Qutulun, 1:182
 Qutulun, daughter of, 1:182
 Temur Oljeitu and, 1:182–183
- Qalan*, 1:100
- Qanglis, 2:91, 184
- Qara Hulegu (d. 1252), 1:71, 139, 153, 176
- Qarakhanid, 2:180
- Qara-Nogai (r. 1361–1363), 1:70
- Qarluqs of Almaliq, 2:161
- Qasar
 Begter murder, 1:94
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:94–95
 descendants of, 1:95
 family of, 1:94
 full name of, 1:94
 murder of Bekhter, 1:154
 Ong Khan, 1:94
 overview of, 1:94–95
 relationship with Chinggis Khan, 2:52
 reputation of, 1:94
 Teb Tenggeri, 2:52, 53
 Temujin and, 1:94
 Yisungge, 1:95
- Qata Kurin, 2:47
- Qataqin, 2:6
- Qazwini, Hamd Allah Mustawfi, 1:39
- Qilij Arslan I, 2:197–198
- Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE), 2:133
- Qing dynasty (1644–1911), 2:176
- Qipchaq, 2:37
- Qizil Arslan Atsiz Khwarazmshah (r. 1127–1156), 2:182
- Qorchi, 1:203
- Qorchi's prophecy and problem, 1:203
- Qori Tumed, 1:203
- Qubchir*, 1:100
- Quduqa Beki, 1:162, 202, 203, 232
- Qulan Khatun, 1:226–227
- Quriltai*
 1234 *quriltai*, 1:32–33
altan uruq and, 1:31
 attendees of, 1:32
 controversial function of, 1:32
 decline of, 1:33
 definition of, 1:31
 elective function of, 1:31
 functions of, 1:31, 32
mochalga and, 1:31
 overview of, 1:3, 31–33
 places for, 1:31
- Quriltai* of 1206
 awards made at, 2:40
 Chinggis Khan, 1:141, 2:1
 confirming Temujin as Chinggis Khan, 2:39, 41
 Ibaqa, as a gift, 2:40
 impact of, 2:41
 importance of, 2:39
 Jurchedei and, 2:40
keshig (bodyguard), 2:40
 organization of the army, 2:40
 overview of, 2:39–41
 title of khan, 2:40
yasa (law code) of Chinggis Khan, 2:41
- Quriltai* of 1234, 2:18
- Qurjaqus, 1:216
- Qutb-ud-Din Aybak, 2:174
- Qutu, 2:90
- Qutulun, daughter of Qaidu, 1:182
- Qutuqtai Khatun, 1:168
- Qutuz (r. 1260)
 Battle of Ayn Jalut, 1:223–224, 2:70
 Baybars and, 1:132, 224
- Rabban Sawma, 1:230, 2:41
- Rabban Sawma, mission of (1286–1288)

- account of the election of Yahba Allah as
Catholicus of the Eastern Church (1281),
 2:237–238
- account of the meeting of Oljeitu and Mar
 Yahba Allah (1304), 2:255–256
- as Bar Sawma, 2:41
- in France, 2:43
- in Italy, 2:42, 43
- itinerary of, 2:42–43
- Jerusalem, 2:43
- King Philip IV (1285–1314), 2:43
- in London, 2:43
- Mar Denha, 2:42
- Mar Yaballaha, 2:42
- Markos, 2:41
- Nicholas IV (Pope), 2:43
- overview of, 2:41–44
- on Paris, 2:43
- purpose of, 2:41
- on relics, 2:42
- results of, 2:43
- Thomas of Anfossi, 2:42
- Rabi' al-Rashidi (Rashid's Quarter), 1:43
- Rachewiltz, Igor de, 2:156
- Ralph of Dom-front, 2:170
- Rashid al-Din (1247–1318)
- on the Battle of Chakirmaut, 2:81
- against Buyuruq Khan, 2:80
- execution of, 1:126
- on Ghazan, 1:148
- medical encyclopedia, translation of,
 2:12
- Raymond III, 2:173
- Raymond of Antioch, 2:173
- Raymond of Poitiers, 2:170, 171
- Raymond-Rupen, 2:173
- Raziyya, Sultana, 2:175
- Red Turban movement, 1:50, 256
- Red Turban name, 2:44
- Red Turban Revolt (1340s–1368)
- Black Plague and, 2:3
- Chinese resentment of the Mongols, 2:44
- leadership of, 2:44
- overview of, 2:44–46
- at Shangdu, 2:45
- Shangdu, 1:39
- Toghon Temur, 1:50, 2:44, 45
- White Lotus Buddhists and, 1:256, 2:44
- Yuan dynasty, 2:44
- Zhu Yuanzhang, 2:45
- Reformation, 2:51
- Religion, 2:122
- Religion and Guyuk, 1:152
- Religious groups, overview of, 1:195–196
- See also specific groups*
- Religious toleration, 1:2, 2:234
- Renaissance, 2:51
- Reynald of Châtillon, 2:171, 172
- Riasanovksy, Nicholas, 2:50–51
- Rihla* (Book of Travels), 1:158
- Riwan of Aleppo, 2:169
- Robert of Clari, 2:218
- Rockets, 2:88
- Roger of Antioch, 2:169–170
- Romanovich, Mstislav, 2:97
- Rukn al-Din Sulayman Shah II, 2:199
- Rulers of
- Chagatai Khanate, 2:260–261
- Golden Horde, 2:260
- Il-Khanate, 2:259–260
- Yeke Monggol Ulus (Mongol Empire),
 2:259
- Yuan Empire, 2:259
- See also specific rulers*
- Rusticiano, 1:179
- Sa'adat Giray Khan, 1:78
- Sadr al-Din Ahmad Khalidi, 1:16
- Sahib Giray, 1:78–79
- Sakya Buddhists
- current status of, 1:240
- founder of, 1:240
- Hevajra Tantra*, 1:240–241
- image of, 1:240
- key text of, 1:240
- Konchog Gyalpo (1034–1102), 1:240
- Koten, 1:241
- Mongols' first contact with, 1:241
- origin of, 1:240
- overview of, 1:240–242
- The Path and Its Fruits*, 1:241
- Phagspa Lama, 1:241–242
- Phags-pa script, 1:241
- Phyagna Dorje, 1:241
- preeminence of, 1:242
- Sakya Pandita (1182–1251), 1:241

- Square Script, 1:241
 supplementary and teaching text for, 1:241
 Virupa, 1:241
- Saladin (1138–1193), 2:172, 191
- Samarkand
 account of under Timur-I Leng (ca. 1403–1406), 2:257–258
 Alexander the Great and, 2:193
 art and culture, 2:193
 Chinggis Khan and, 2:193
 date founded, 2:193
 economy of, 2:193
 enrichment of, 2:193–194
 Gur-e Amir mausoleum, 2:194
 Hellenistic influences in, 2:193
 location of, 2:193
 as Maracanda, 2:193
 mosque of Bibi-Khanom, 2:194
 overview of, 2:193–195
 photograph of, 2:194
 Rigistan Square, 2:193
 ruin of, 2:193
 the Shah-i-Zinde, 2:194
 significance of, 2:193
 Silk Road trade, 2:193
 Timur and, 2:193–194
 Ulugh Beg and, 2:195
 Uzbeks and, 2:195
 Zoroastrianism and, 2:193
- Sanjar, Sultan, 2:180
- Saqsi Buqa (r. 1312–1320), 1:70
- Sarai
 Batu and, 1:2
 business life, 1:34
 connection with Cairo, 1:34
 demise of, 1:35
 description of, 1:34
 Ibn Battuta on, 1:34
 location of, 1:33, 34
 New Sarai, 1:2, 34
 overview of, 1:2, 33–35
 religions in, 1:34
 size of, 1:33
 structures of, 1:33
- Sari al-Saqati, 1:245
- Sariq Khan, 1:215, 216
- Sartaq (r. 1256–1257), 1:66, 130
- Sasanid Empire (224–651), 1:230
- Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451), 2:176
- Scythians (ca. 1200 BCE–300 CE), 2:184
- Second Turkic Empire (682–731), 2:185
- The Secret History of the Mongols*
 adventures of Hoelun and her children, 1:234
alginchi (scouts), 1:98
 author of, 2:149
 bodyguards, 1:6
 on Chinggis Khan, 2:149
 Cleaves, Francis W., 2:150
 dates of, 2:149
 de Rachewiltz, Igor, 2:150
 as epic literature, 2:149
 focus of activities of, 2:149
 importance of, 2:148–149
juyin, 1:238
 Mahmud, 1:84
 Ming dynasty of China and, 2:149–150
 Ogodei, 1:121, 2:149
 Oirat, 1:231
 Onggirad Dei Sechen, 1:233
ordo (*ordu*), 1:93
 overview of, 2:123–124, 148–150
 redaction of, 2:149
 significance of, 2:149
 social organization, 1:103
 Tatars, 1:250
 title, origin of, 2:149
 translation of, 2:150
yam system, 1:110
 Year of the Mouse, 2:149
- Selim the Grim (1465–1520), 1:224
- Seljuk Sultan Sanjar (r. 1118–1153), 2:182, 183
- Seljuk Sultanate of Rum, 2:97, 98, 99
- Seljuk Turks of Rum, 2:163, 166
- Semuren
 categories in, 1:243
 Chinese scholar-official class and, 1:243–244
 “Clans and Peoples,” 1:242
 meaning of, 1:242
 overview of, 1:197, 242–244
 Tao Zongyi, 1:242
 use of the term *semu*, 1:242
- Senggum, 2:205
- Septicemic, 2:9

- Seventh Crusade, 1:131
- Shadibeg (r. 1400–1407), 1:25
- Shah-i-Zinde, the, 2:194
- Shamanism
- the *chidkur* and children, 1:36–37
 - decline of, 1:37
 - Etuken, 1:35
 - the Kipchaks and, 1:221
 - Koke Mongke Tenggeri (Blue Eternal Sky), 1:35
 - lost souls, retrieval of, 1:36, 37
 - Marco Polo's Description of Mongol Shamanism (ca. 1300), 2:250–251
 - Mongolian shamanism, 1:35
 - overview of, 1:35–37
 - roles of the shamans, 1:36
 - shamans, specialists, 1:37
 - souls and, 1:36
 - spirit world, 1:35
 - spirits, hierarchy of, 1:36
 - the *tailaghan*, 1:36
 - worldview of Mongolian shamanism, 1:35
- Shamans, 2:52
- Shang dynasty (ca. 1766–1122 BCE), 2:133
- Shangdu
- alternative names for, 1:37
 - architecture of, 1:38
 - importance of, 1:38, 39
 - Khubilai Khan's "stately pleasure dome," 1:38, 2:251
 - layout of, 1:38
 - location of, 1:38
 - name change, 1:38
 - overview of, 1:37–39
 - population of, 1:38
- Sharia, 1:59
- Shatuo, 1:235
- Shayban, 1:163
- Sheep, 2:121
- Sheng* (province), 1:7
- Shengwu qinzheng lu* (The Campaigns of the Holy Warrior)
- Atwood, Christopher P., 2:152
 - Chinese translation of, 2:151–152
 - Chinggis Khan and, 2:150–151
 - compared to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, 2:151
 - definition of, 2:150
 - edited text of, 2:152
 - Hambis, Louis, 2:152
 - Jia Jinyan, 2:152
 - mistakes in, 2:152
 - overview of, 2:124, 150–152
 - Pelliot, Paul, 2:152
 - scholarly work on, 2:152
 - sources of, 2:151
 - Tao Zongyi and, 2:152
 - translations of, 2:150–151
 - Wang Guowei, 2:152
- Shera, 1:170
- Shigi-Qutuqtu (ca. 1180–1262), 1:58, 84
- Shiremun
- challenger to Mongke, 2:46
 - Guyuk's election and, 1:11
 - political support for, 1:173
 - seizing of the throne, 2:3
- Shiremun's Coup (1250)
- description of, 2:46–47
 - execution of Shiremun, 2:47
 - investigation of, 2:47
 - Keshik, 2:46–47
 - Menggeser, 2:47
 - noyad* executions, 2:47
 - overview of, 2:46–48
 - Qata Kurin, 2:47
 - secret army, 2:46
- Shirin, 1:168
- Shis*, 1:9
- Shi'uchi* (chisel tactic), 2:111
- Siege warfare
- captives and, 2:105, 106
 - counterfortress, 2:105
 - description of, 2:105–106
 - disassembled siege weapons, 2:106
 - flood, 2:107
 - ilal* (wall), 2:105
 - illustration of the fall of Baghdad, 2:106
 - Mongols use of, 2:61
 - naptha, 2:106
 - overview of, 2:105–107
 - Russian campaign and, 2:107
 - sappers, 2:106
 - siege engines, 2:106
 - use of conscripts, 2:105, 107
 - use of local levies, 2:105–106, 107
 - See also specific events*

- Silver, 2:122, 144
- Sinan (d. 1192), 1:200
- Song Empire (960–1279)
- accomplishments of, 2:196–197
 - fundamental national policy of, 2:195
 - Jia Sidao, 2:196
 - Jin Empire and, 2:94, 176–177
 - Jurchen and, 1:212–213, 2:196
 - Kaifeng, 2:196
 - Kaixi War (1205–1208), 2:196
 - Khitan Liao dynasty (907–1125), 2:195
 - Khubilai Khan, 2:196
 - military weakness, 2:195
 - Mongke Khan, 2:164, 196
 - Mongol-Song alliance, 2:196
 - Northern Song, 2:195–196
 - Ogodei and war with, 2:163
 - overview of, 2:163, 195–197
 - Song army, destruction of, 2:196
 - Song navy, defeat of, 2:196
 - Southern Song period (1127–1279), 2:176, 196
 - Tangut Xia dynasty (1038–1237), 2:195
- Sorqan Shira, 1:48, 143, 145
- Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252)
- alternative name for, 1:183
 - change in the line of succession, 1:184
 - characteristics of, 1:184, 185
 - as an exemplar for proper behavior, 1:184
 - father of, 1:183
 - image of, 1:184
 - influence of, 1:184
 - legacy of, 1:185
 - marriage of, 1:183
 - Oghul Qaimish, plot against, 1:167, 170, 185
 - overview of, 1:xviii, 183–186
 - political acumen of, 1:184
 - reputation of, 1:123, 185
 - sons of, 1:183–184
 - status as a Nestorian Christian, 1:185
- Southern Song dynasty (1125–1279), 2:176
- Square Script, 1:241
- Su Ting, 2:153
- Subedei (1176–1248)
- death of, 2:109
 - dorben noqas* (four hounds), 2:108
 - hounds, steeds, and Paladins, 2:109
 - invasion of Eastern Europe, 2:109
 - invasion of Hungary, 2:100
 - invasion of western Turkistan, 2:108
 - Irtys River battle, 2:108
 - Jin, conquering of, 2:26
 - Kaifeng siege, 2:94–95
 - Kalka River battle, 2:109
 - Merkit surrender, 2:108
 - Mohi battle, 2:103–104
 - overview of, 2:107–110
 - significance of, 2:109
 - taking of Kiev, 2:109
 - as an Uriyangqai Mongol, 2:107–108
- Sufis
- abstinence, 1:244, 245
 - Abu Yazid al-Bistami, 1:246
 - asceticism, 1:245
 - classical Sufism, 1:245
 - definition of, 1:244
 - Dhu al-Nun al-Misri, 1:245
 - doctrine of dissolution, 1:246
 - drunken school of, 1:246
 - importance of, 1:247
 - Islam and, 1:246–247
 - Jalal al-Din, 1:247, 2:225
 - masters, 1:245–246
 - Mawlawiyah *tariqa*, 1:246
 - Muslims and, 1:54, 244–247
 - mysticism, 1:244
 - overview of, 1:244–247
 - persecution of, 1:244
 - as a phenomenon, 1:247
 - poetry, 1:248
 - popularity of, 1:246
 - Sari al-Saqati, 1:245
 - spiritual appointment, 1:244
 - Sufi man pictured in a landscape, 1:245
 - Sufi movement, 1:244–245
 - tariqa* movement, 1:246
 - whirling dervishes, 1:246
- Sulaiman Shah, 2:73
- Sulayman I ibn Qutlumush, 2:197
- Sultanate of Rum
- Anatolian rivals, 2:198
 - Baba Isaq (1240/1241), 2:199
 - Battle of Myriocephalum, 2:198
 - Byzantine-Seljuk relations, 2:198–199
 - capitals of, 2:197
 - decline of, 2:199

- Kay-Khusraw I, 2:199
 Kay-Khusraw II, 2:199
 Kay-Qubadh I (1220–1237), 2:199
 mixed marriages, 2:199
 name of, 2:197
 Nicaean-Seljuk alliance, 2:199
 overview of, 2:197–200
 photograph of the mausoleum of Qilij Arslan II, Alaeddin Camii Mosque, 2:198
 Qilij Arslan I, 2:197–198
 Rukn al-Din Sulayman Shah II, 2:199
 rulers of, 2:197
Saljuq-nama of Ibn Bibi, 2:199
 Seljuk-Byzantine relations, 2:198
 Sulayman I ibn Qutlumush, 2:197
- Sultaniyya
 Amiranshah and, 1:41
 architecture of, 1:40
 Arghun Khan and, 1:39
 decline of, 1:41
 description of, 1:40–41
 expansion of, 1:41
 location of the ruins of, 1:39
 naming of, 1:40
 Oljeitu and, 1:39
 overview of, 1:39–41
 roads and, 1:41
 significance of, 1:41
 site of, 1:39
 tomb of Oljeitu, photograph of, 1:40
- Syrian defeat of the Mongols, 2:71, 72, 164
- Tabriz
 Arghun Aqa and, 1:42
 Baiju and, 1:42
 Chormaqan, 1:42
 commerce reputation of, 1:43
 decline of, 1:43
 Hulegu, 1:42
 location of, 1:42
 overview of, 1:3, 42–44
 Rabi' al-Rashidi (Rashid's Quarter), 1:43
 religions and, 1:42–43
 significance of, 1:43
 Toqtamysh, conquest of, 1:191
 Venetians in, 1:43
 water shortages, 1:42
- Tachar Noyan, 2:75
- Tactics
 archery, 2:110, 211
 Fabian tactics, 2:111
 field army, 2:110–111
 flanking maneuvers, 2:111
 hunting, 2:110
 kill zones, 2:111
nerge maneuver, 2:110–111
noqai kerel (feigned retreat), 2:111
 overview of, 2:110–111
 Parthian shot, 2:111
 scheduled attacks, 2:110
shi'uchi (chisel tactic), 2:111
- Taiping, 1:27
- Tama*, 2:65
- Tamerlane. *See* Timur-i Leng (1336–1405)
- Tamgha*
 of Chinggis Khan, 1:96
 commercial tax and, 1:96
 functions of, 1:96
 ink color, 1:96–97
 languages used, 1:97
 as a livestock brand, 1:96
 overview of, 1:96–97
 as a seal, 1:96, 97
 symbol of aristocracy, 1:96
 as a tax, 1:97
- Tancred of Lecce, 2:168, 169
- Tang dynasty (618–907), 1:247
- Tangut
 Chaghan, 1:248
 culture, 1:248
 as Danxiang, 1:247
 definition of, 1:247
 as *juyin* (auxiliaries), 1:248
 Mi-nyag, 1:247
 origin of, 1:247
 overview of, 1:195, 247–249
 Tibetan Buddhism and, 1:248
 writing system, 1:248
 Xi Xia and, 1:248
- Tangut Xia dynasty (1038–1237), 2:195
- Tanksuq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'ulum-i khitay* (Treasure Book of the Il-Khans on the Sciences and Learning of China), 2:12, 140–141
- Tanma*
 the *alginchin*, 2:112

- in China, 2:112
- definition of, 2:112
- Eastern Mongols, 2:113
- importance of, 2:113
- Inner Mongolia and, 2:112, 113
- Jalayir Mongol Muqali (d. 1223), 2:112
- Khitan troops, 2:113
- local forces associated with, 2:112
- the Onggud, 2:112
- origin of word, 2:112
- original intent in establishment of, 2:112
- original *tanma* force, 2:112
- overview of, 2:112–113
- positioning of, 2:82
- significance of, 1:9
- tanmachi* and, 2:62
- Tanmachi* or *tammachi*
 - alginchi* (scouts), 1:98
 - as the basis for any large-scale campaign, 1:97–98
 - Chormaqaq and, 2:62
 - definition of, 1:97
 - descendants of the original *alginchi* or *tanmachi*, 1:99
 - horses and, 1:98–99
 - La flor des estoires de la terre d'Orient* (The Flower of Histories of the Land of the East) and, 2:65–66
 - military and, 2:62
 - overview of, 1:97–99
- Tanmachin*, 2:66
- Tao Zongyi, 1:242, 243
- Taqiyya*, 1:200
- Tarim Basin, Asia, photograph of, 2:203
- Tariqa* movement, 1:246
- Tarmashirin, 1:72, 158
- Tarmashirin, overthrow of (1334)
 - brothers of Tarmashirin, 2:48
 - the Chagatayids, 2:48, 49
 - consequences of, 2:49
 - Mawarannahr, 2:49
 - Moghulistan, 2:49
 - overview of, 2:48–50
 - rule of the Chagatai Khanate, 2:49
 - Tarmashirin, conversion to Islam, 2:48, 49
- Tatar Yoke
 - census taking, 2:50
 - concept of, 2:4
 - Karamzin, N. M., 2:50
 - khanate's interactions with the Rus' principalities, 2:50
 - Nevsky, Alexander, 2:51
 - overview of, 2:50–52
 - the Reformation and, 2:51
 - the Renaissance and, 2:51
 - Riasanovksy, Nicholas, 2:50–51
 - Russian Church chronicles, 2:50
 - scholarly view of, 2:50–51
 - schools of Russian nationalist history and, 2:50
 - as a trope in Russian national history, 2:51
- Tatars
 - Ambaghai, 1:249–250
 - Chinggis Khan's wars against, 1:250
 - confederation, 1:249, 250
 - current status of, 1:250
 - defeat of, 1:250
 - definition of, 1:249
 - feud with the Mongols, 1:249
 - Jin Empire and, 1:249, 250
 - juyin*, 1:214, 249
 - Lithuanian Tatars, 1:192
 - massacre of, 1:104
 - Me'ujin Se'ultu, 1:250
 - overview of, 1:193, 249–251
 - from Tatar to Tartars and steak tatar, 1:251
 - the term “Tatar,” 1:249, 250
 - Yesugei, murder of, 1:250
- Tatar-Tong'a, 1:108, 228
- Taxation
 - agricultural, 1:101
 - forms of regular taxation, 1:100–101
 - initial taxation, 1:99
 - irregular assessments, 1:100
 - Mahmud Yalavach's reforms, 1:100
 - mal* tax, 1:100
 - methods of, 1:100
 - mid-13th century, 1:101
 - Mongke's system of, 1:101
 - necessity of, 1:99
 - overview of, 1:99–101
 - during the reign of Ogodei, 1:100
 - requisition of livestock, 1:100
 - taghar* assessment, 1:100
 - tamgha* tax, 1:101
 - taxes or pasture, 1:114

- tithe, 1:100
touzghou or *tourghou* tax, 1:100–101
 tribute, 1:100
 Yelu Chucai's reforms, 1:100
 Tayang Khan (d. 1204), 1:227, 2:79
 Teb Tenggeri, 1:95, 135, 154, 166
 Teb Tenggeri, death of (1206)
 execution of, 2:52, 53
 importance of shamans, 2:52
 importance to Chinggis Khan, 2:2, 52
 Jochi Qasar and, 2:52
 motivations for, 2:52
 overview of, 2:52–54
 prophecy of, 2:52, 53
 Qasar and Chinggis Khan, 2:52, 2:53
 as a shaman, 2:2, 52
 Soqor and, 2:53
 Temuge Otchigan, 2:53
 Teguder Ahmad (d. 1284), 1:93, 148
 Tele Buqa, 1:24
 Temuge, 1:1
 Temuge Otchigin, 1:12, 2:53
 Temujin (1165–1227)
 Baljuna Covenant (1203), 2:6–8
 as Chinggis Khan, 1:140
 Kereit and, 1:216, 217
 murder of Bekhter, 1:154
 Onggirad Dei Sechen and, 1:233
 overview of, 1:xv
 Temur Khan (r. 1294–1307)
 accession to the throne, 1:44
 Bayan Noyan (1236–1295), 1:46
 Bulukhan, his wife, 1:45
 depiction of, 1:44
 foreign campaigns and, 1:44–45
 Jingim, 1:44
 overview of, 1:44–46
 reconciliation with his kinsmen, 1:45
 return of the Pax Mongolica, 1:45
 Temur Oljeitu, 1:44, 182–183
Tenggeri
 as amoral, 2:153
 association with “God” and “heaven,”
 2:154
 definition of, 2:152
 epithets attributed to, 2:153
 fortune of, 2:153
 importance of, 2:152, 153
 influence of, 2:153
 John of Plano Carpini on, 2:153
 Khubilai Khan and heaven, 2:154
 and the legitimacy of the khan, 2:153
 Mongolian *tenggeri*, 2:154
 overview of, 2:122, 152–155
 relationship between heaven and Earth,
 2:153
 rituals and, 2:153
 shamanism and, 2:154
 translation of, 2:152
 Zhao Gong on, 2:153
 Teutonic Knights
 in the Baltic region, 1:66
 Battle of Leignitz, 2:99, 101
 battle on the ice, 1:67
 in Eastern Europe, 2:17
 Thomas of Anfossi, 2:42
 Thomas of Spalato, 2:20
 Thunder crash bombs, 2:88
 Tibet, 1:242
 Tibetan Buddhism, 1:248, 2:205
 Tibetan medical practitioners, 2:140
 Tibetan Sakya Buddhism, 1:196
 Timur Qutlugh, 1:25
 Timur-i Leng (1336–1405)
 Account of Samarkand Under (ca. 1403–
 1406), 2:257–258
 Bayezid I and, 2:67
 Blue Horde, 1:70
 at Damascus, 1:188
 death of, 1:188
 Delhi, sacking and burning of, 1:187
 disability of, 1:186
 Golden Horde, 1:74
 Golden Horde, conquest of, 1:187
 his success in the Middle East, 1:186–187
 Husain, victory over, 1:186
 image of, 1:187
 invasions of, 1:187–188
 Kipchak steppes, 2:186
 legitimizing his invasions, 1:188
 Mawarannhar, 1:89
 overview of, 1:124, 186–188
 place of birth, 1:186
 remodels Samarkand, 1:188
 rise to power, 2:49
 Samarkand and, 2:193–194

- as Timur the Lame (Tamerlane), 1:186
- title of, 1:47
- Toqtamyshev invasions, 1:187
- Titles
 - amir*, 1:47
 - aqā* or *akha* (elder brother), 1:47
 - ba'atur* or *bahadur*, 1:48
 - beg*, 1:47
 - beki*, 1:48
 - Chinggis Khan, 1:47
 - darqan* (*tarqan*, *tarkhan*, *darkhan*), 1:48
 - functionary titles, 1:46
 - guregen* (*kuregen*), 1:47
 - honorific titles, 1:48
 - il-khan, 1:47
 - Kha'an or Qa'an, 1:47
 - khaghan, 1:46
 - khan, 1:46, 47
 - khatun, 1:47
 - khuda* or *quad*, 1:47
 - mergen*, 1:48
 - military titles, 1:46
 - nokor* (companion), 1:47
 - overview of, 1:46–48
 - padishah* (emperor), 1:47
 - sultan, 1:47
- Tode Mongke (r. 1280–1287)
 - conversion to Islam, 2:32
 - failure as a ruler, 1:24
- Toghon Temur (r. 1333–1370)
 - accession to the throne, 1:48
 - Ayushiridara, 1:50
 - Bayan Noyan and, 1:49
 - coup, 1:49–50
 - death of, 1:26
 - as disposable, 1:49
 - exile of, 1:49
 - overview of, 1:4, 48–50
 - poor governance and, 1:49
 - Red Turban Revolt, 2:44, 45
 - Red Turbans and, 1:50
 - reign of, 1:4
 - Toghto and, 1:50
- Toghoon, 1:27
- Toghrlil, 1:216, 217, 227–228
- Toghrlil Ong Khan, 1:141
- Tolui Khan (1191–1232)
 - accidental death question, 1:190
 - alcoholism, 1:189
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:189
 - death of, 1:189
 - military abilities of, 1:189
 - military campaigns of, 1:189
 - overview of, 1:189–190
 - sons of, 1:189
 - Sorqoqtani, 1:189, 190
 - title of khan, 1:190
 - wives of, 1:189
- Toluid Revolution (1250)
 - consequences of, 1:3
 - description of, 2:55
 - first/second *quriltai*, 2:54
 - Khoja, 2:54
 - Mongke Khan and, 1:115, 2:54–55
 - Naqu, 2:54, 55
 - Oghul Qaimish and, 1:54, 55
 - overview of, 2:54–56
 - Shiremun and, 2:55
- Toluids, 1:52
- Toqa-Temur, 1:70
- Toqta Khan (r. 1290–1312), 1:24–25, 53
- Toqtamyshev (d. 1406)
 - Battle of Kulikovo Pole, 2:30–31
 - death of, 1:192
 - Edigu and, 1:25
 - in Lithuania, 1:192
 - Lithuanian Tatars, 1:192
 - Mamai defeat, 1:74
 - overview of, 1:191–192
 - Tabriz, conquest of, 1:191
 - Temur-Qutlugh, 1:192
 - Timur and, 1:187, 191–192
 - Timur-i Leng (Tamerlane) and, 1:191
 - unification of the Jochid realm, 1:191
 - Urus Khan and, 1:70
- Toqtoa Beki, 1:226, 2:81
- Toquchar, 1:82
- Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246)
 - alternative names and spelling for, 1:51
 - characteristics of, 1:51
 - criticism of, 1:51, 52
 - Fatima and, 1:52
 - Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), 1:150, 152
 - imperial decrees, 1:51
 - independence of, 1:51
 - Naiman and, 1:228

- overview of, 1:xviii, 51–52
- quriltai* election and, 1:51
- as regent of the empire, 1:1, 51, 52
- reputation of, 1:51–52
- Toluids and, 1:52
- the wife of Ogodei, 1:10, 11, 51
- Touzghou* or *tourghou*, 1:100–101
- Traidenis (r. 1270–1282), 2:189
- Transcaucasia, 2:84, 86, 98, 117, 163
- Transcaucasia, conquest of, 2:163
- Transfer of authority
 - Chin-Temur, 1:102
 - Chormaqan Noyan, 1:101–102
 - Dayir Noyan, 1:102
 - difficulty in, 1:103
 - Edgu-Temur, 1:102
 - Korguz, 1:102
 - overview of, 1:101–103
 - the *tanma*, 1:102, 103
- The Travels of Marco Polo*, 1:166, 178
- Treaty of Devol, 2:169
- Trebizond
 - commercial importance, 2:200
 - current status of, 2:200
 - founding of, 2:200
 - in Greek legend, 2:200
 - Il-Khanate and, 2:201
 - isolation of, 2:200
 - location of, 2:200
 - overview of, 2:163, 200–202
 - trade, 2:200–201
 - Trebizond kingdom, 2:163
- Trebuchet
 - Acre siege (1291), 2:116
 - at Aleppo, 2:115
 - assault on Xiangyang, 2:115
 - Byzantine siege (1165), 2:115
 - counterweight trebuchet, 2:114, 115
 - development of, 2:115
 - mangonel, depiction of, 2:114
 - manpower for, 2:115
 - Mongol use of, 2:115
 - overview of, 2:114–116
 - range of, 2:115
 - rate of fire, 2:115
 - torsion-based mangonels, 2:115
 - traction-based weapons, 2:114–115
 - varieties of, 2:114
 - western trebuchet (*manjaniq maghribi*), 2:115
- Tribe
 - basis of social organization, 1:103
 - Bodonchar, 1:104
 - bolok irgen*, 1:104, 105
 - gure'en*, 1:105
 - kinship, 1:104
 - mingan*, 1:105
 - myriarchies*, 1:105
 - oboqs*, 1:104
 - overview of, 1:103–106
 - The Secret History of the Mongols* on, 1:103, 104
 - urughs*, 1:104
 - wars of unification and, 1:104
 - See also *specific groups*
- Tribes, overview of, 1:191–192
- Tsunami strategy
 - definition of, 2:116
 - destruction of the Khwarazmian Empire, 2:117
 - development of, 2:117
 - explanation of, 2:63, 116–117
 - intelligence gathering, 2:116
 - invasion, 2:117
 - key to the success of, 2:117
 - overview of, 2:116–118
 - tanma* units, 2:117–118
 - time schedule, 2:116–117
- Tughluk Temur Khan, 1:87
- Tughluq dynasty, 2:175, 176
- Turk khanate, 1:251
- Turkestan, 1:87
- Ugechi Qasaga, 1:232
- Ugra River, Battle of, 2:258
- Ulaanbaatar, 2:159
- Ulema, 1:246–247
- Ulus*
 - best-known *uluses*, 1:106
 - boundaries of, 1:107
 - Chaghatai's, 1:106
 - contraction of, 1:106
 - definitions of, 1:106
 - disappearance of distinct *uluses*, 1:107
 - expansion of, 1:106
 - four *uluses* of Chinggis Khan's sons, 1:106

- Golden Horde term, 1:106
- Jochi's, 1:106
- khanates and, 1:107
- Ogodei's, 1:106
- overview of, 1:106–108
- prince's *ulus*, 1:107
- reduction of the *ulus* of Ogodei, 1:106
- Tolui's, 1:106
- Umayyad Caliphate (661–750), 2:165
- Urban II (Pope), 2:168
- Uriyangqai Mongol, 2:107
- Urughs*, 1:104
- Uruk Khatun, 1:174
- Urus Khan (1368–1378), 1:70
- Uyghur Chinqai, 2:7
- Uyghur Khanate (744–840), destruction of the, 1:202
- Uyghuristan
 - capital cities of, 2:202
 - Chinggis Khan, special relationship with, 2:204
 - date of submission to the Mongols, 2:202
 - international trade and mercantile activities, 2:202–203
 - as the kingdom of the Uyghur *idiqu* (ruler), 2:202
 - location of, 2:202
 - overview of, 2:161, 202–204
 - production of both sacred and secular literature, 2:203
 - satellite photo of the Tarim Basin, Asia., 2:203
 - winter and summer capitals, 2:202
- Uyghurs
 - alliances of, 1:251–252
 - Chinese Tang state and, 1:252
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:253, 2:204
 - friction with the Tibetans, 1:252
 - Kara Khitai and, 1:253
 - Karabalghasan, 1:252
 - Manichaeism, 1:252
 - Mongol military campaigns and, 1:253, 2:204
 - overview of, 1:195, 251–253
 - religious pluralism, 2:203
 - reputation of, 1:253, 2:203
 - state of, 1:252, 253
 - as the Toquz Oghuz, 1:251
 - trade, 2:202–203
 - Turk khanate, 1:251
 - as Turks, 1:251
 - Uyghur diaspora, 1:252, 253
 - a Uyghur prince with attendants, image of, 1:252
 - Uyghur script, 1:109, 30, 108, 110, 195
 - Uyghurstan state, 1:252
 - Uzbeks, 2:204
 - voluntary submission to the Mongols, 1:253, 2:204
- Uzbek Khan (1282–1341; r. 1313–1341)
 - Baba Tukles converts the Khan, 1:54
 - Buddhism and, 1:53
 - Christianity and, 1:53
 - conversion to Islam, 1:53, 54, 74
 - impact of his reign, 1:54
 - Muslim Il-Khanate war, 1:53
 - Muslims and, 1:53
 - overview of, 1:53–55
 - political manipulation with Russian princes, 1:53–54
 - Sunni Muslims and, 1:254
 - taxes and, 1:53, 54
 - Toqta Khan and, 1:53
- Uzbekistan, 1:255
- Uzbeks
 - Abulkhair Khan, 1:254
 - definition of, 1:254
 - dialects of, 1:254
 - division of Uzbek territory, 1:255
 - as an ethnic name for all the Turkic, 1:255
 - Girei, 1:254
 - Ismail, 1:255
 - Janibek, 1:254
 - Karakalpakstan, 1:255
 - Muhammad Shaybani, Khan of the Uzbeks (1500–1510), 1:254–255
 - national identity, 1:255
 - overview of, 1:253–255
 - Pan-Turkic identity, 1:255
 - populations of, 1:254
 - Uzbekistan, 1:255
- Vatatzes III, John, 2:99
- Vietnam, 2:188
- Vytenis (r. 1295–1315), 2:189

- Wa Kang, 2:76
 Wallachia, invasion of, 2:19
 Wang Guowei, 2:152
 Wanyan Aguda (1068–1123), 1:212
 War with the Jin Empire, 2:2
 Weapon technology, 2:61, 63–64
 Weaponized gunpowder, 2:87
 Weapons
 arms manufacturing, 2:120
 arrow shafts, 2:119
 arrowheads, 2:119–120
 bowstring, 2:118–119
 composite bow, 2:89, 118
 composite bow, construction of, 2:118
 composite bow, draw of, 2:119
 composite bow, range of, 2:119
 illustration of a horse archer, 2:119
 itinerant blacksmiths, 2:120
 lances and spears, 2:120
 maces and axes, 2:120
 most common among the Mongol warriors,
 2:118
 overview of, 2:118–120
 quality of, 2:120
 whistling arrowheads, 2:120
 Western Liao Empire, 2:176
 Whirling dervishes, 1:246
 White Horde, 1:70
 White Lotus Buddhism, 1:196
 White Lotus Buddhists
 Amidha Buddha, 1:256
 as a derogatory term, 1:257
 Huisi (515–576), 1:256
 Huiwen, 1:255
 Maitreya Buddha, 1:256
 Ming dynasty persecution of, 1:257
 overview of, 1:255–258
 patriarchs of, 1:255, 256
 popularity of, 1:256
 Red Turban movement, 1:256
 Red Turbans, 2:44
 temples of, 1:256, 257
 the Three Truths, 1:255–256
 White Lotus secret society, 2:44
 zhiguan meditation, 1:256
 Zhiyi (538–597), 1:256
 Zhu Yuanzhang and, 1:257
 William of Rubruck, journey of (1253–1255)
 ‘Abd Allah and, 2:56
 account of the distinctive Mongol hairstyle
 (1250s), 2:230–231
 Bartholomew of Cremona, 2:56
 description of audience with Mongke Khan
 (May 31, 1254), 2:234–235
 description of Mongke’s drinking fountain
 (1250s), 2:229–230
 description of yurts (1250s), 2:231
 enjoys Kumiss (1250s), 2:228–229
 as a Franciscan, 2:56
 Gosset, 2:56
 itinerary of, 2:56
 on kumiss, 2:138, 139
 Louis IX (King) of France and, 2:4, 56
 Mongke Khan and, 1:18, 2:56
 overview of, 2:56–57
 private goal of, 2:102
 on Qutuqtaï Khatun, 1:68, 169
 religion and, 2:56
 report of, 2:56–57
 return journey, 2:57
 view of the Mongols, 2:57
 Wiraraja (King), 2:92, 93
 Witchcraft trials and executions by drowning,
 1:170
 Women in the court
 Chabi (wife of Khubilai Khan), 1:55
 Doquz Khatun (wife of Hulegu), 1:55, 57
 Doquz Khatun with Hulegu, illustration of,
 1:56
 finances of, 1:55–56
 military influence of, 1:57
 in the Mongol Army, 1:56
 Oghul Qaimish (1248–1250), 1:55
 Orghina Khatun (r. 1251–1260), 1:55
 overview of, 1:55–57
 religious affiliation of, 1:57
 Sorqoqtani Beki (wife of Tolui), 1:55, 57
 Toregene Khatun (r. 1242–1246), 1:55
 Writing systems
 Chinggis Khan (1162–1227), 1:108
 illustration of, 1:108
 languages, 1:109
 lingua franca of the Mongol Empire, 1:109
 overview of, 1:108–110
 Persian language, 1:109
 Phagspa Lama, 1:109

- Phags-pa script, 1:109–110
 Tatar-Tong'a, 1:108
 Uyghur language, 1:109
 Uyghur script, 1:108, 109
 Wu-ku-sun Chung Tuan, 2:222–223
- Xanadu* (Coleridge), 1:166
 Xi Xia (1038–1227)
 Anquan (r. 1206–1211), 2:206
 Chinggis Khan and, 2:205, 206
 invasions of the Jin, 2:206
 Li Yuanhao, 2:205
 massacre of Zhongxing's population, 2:206
 Muqali (1170–1223), 2:206
 nomads of Mongolia and, 2:205
 overview of, 2:161, 204–206
 rebellion of, 2:206
 role in the history of the Mongol Empire,
 2:204
 Senggum, 2:205
 the Tangut and, 2:205
 Tibetan Buddhism, 2:205
 as a tributary of the Jin Empire, 2:205
 Xiangyang, siege of (1267–1273)
 commanders of, 2:207
 description of, 2:207
 duration of, 2:207
 as an example of Mongol power, 2:208
 at Fancheng, 2:207
 fortifications of, 2:207
 location of, 2:207
 overview of, 2:163, 206–208
 significance of, 2:206–207
 Song reactions to, 2:207–208
 trebuchet, use of the, 2:208
 Xin Jun (New Army), 2:82
Xingsheng, 1:7
 Xiongnu Empire (209 BCE–93 CE), 2:61
- Yahbh-Allah III, 1:230
Yam (*jam*) postal system
 abuse of, 1:111
 Chinggis Exchange, 2:11
 definition of, 1:110
 fixed post stations, 1:111
 founder of, 1:110
 Ghazan Khan and, 1:111
 in the Il-Khanate, 1:111
 Khubilai Khan and, 1:111
 main postal roads, 1:110
 morin jam (horse station), 1:110, 111
 narin jam (fine station), 1:111
 overview of, 1:110–112
 post roads, 1:111
 pree-Mongol origins of, 1:112
 significance of, 1:112
 Yanjing, 1:38
Yasa
 after the dissolution of the Mongol Empire,
 1:58–59
 alternative names for, 1:58
 Chagatai and, 1:58
 definition of, 1:58
 Khubilai Khan and, 1:58
 legal systems and, 1:58
 Mongke Khan, 1:58
 Muslims and, 1:58, 59
 Ogodei and, 1:58
 overview of, 1:58–59
 sharia and, 1:59
 sources for knowledge of, 1:59
 universal application of, 1:58
 Yeke Monggol Ulus (Mongol Empire)
 Mongol identity, 1:140
 organization of, 1:228
 quriltai of 1206, 1:228
 rulers of, 2:259
 Yelu Chucai (1189–1243)
 as *bichigchi*, 1:113
 Buddhism and, 1:113
 conflict with Toregene, 1:114
 description of Mawarannahr (ca. 1220),
 2:224
 family influence, 1:114
 his *Xiyou lu* (Entries on a Journey to the
 West), 1:113
 importance of, 1:113
 Jurchen calendar *Daming li*, revise of, 2:125
 overview of, 1:113–115
 specialty of, 1:113
 spirit tablet, 1:114
 taxation system and, 1:100
 taxes or pasture, 1:114
 translations of, 1:113
 as Urtu Saqal (Long Beard), 1:113
 as a *Zhongshu ling*, 1:7

- Yelu Chucai (1190–1244), 2:140, 224
- Yelu Dashi, 1:219, 2:179–180
- Yesu Mongke, 1:71, 152–153, 177
- Yesugei (d. 1171)
- Borte and, 1:233
 - family of, 1:234
 - Hoelun, abduction of, 1:153
 - Hoelun, marriage to, 1:225
 - Kereit and, 1:216
- Yesugei, death of (ca. 1174/1175)
- abandonment of Hoelun, 2:58–59
 - anda* bond/relationship, 2:59
 - consequences of, 2:58
 - description of, 2:58
 - Hoelun (d. ca. 1210), 1:53, 2:58
 - overview of, 2:58–60
 - protocol of, 1:250
 - The Secret History of the Mongols*, 2:59
- Yinshan zhengyao* (proper and essential things for the emperor's food and drink) (1330)
- avoidance chapters of, 2:155–156
 - the Bi-chi, 2:140
 - chapter 1 of, 2:155
 - chapter 2 of, 2:156
 - chapter 3 of, 2:156
 - compiler of, 2:156
 - current status of, 2:156–157
 - definition of, 2:155
 - Hu Sihui, 2:156
 - Islamic influence in, 2:156
 - medical information, 2:140, 155
 - overview of, 2:123, 155–157
 - on pasta, 2:147
 - present form of, 2:155
- Yisuder, 1:27
- Yisu-Mongke, 1:139
- Yisungge, 1:95
- Yongle, 1:27
- Ystoria Mongalorum (History of the Mongols)*, 2:27
- Yuan dynasty, 1:xx, 2:44, 151
- Yuan Empire (1265–1368)
- Chinese tradition and, 1:116
 - as a compromise, 1:116
 - conquest of China, 1:115
 - Da Yuan (Khanate China), 1:116
 - da zongzheng fu*, 1:116
 - daruqachis* (imperial representatives), 1:116
 - foreigners and, 1:116
 - Khubilai Khan, 1:115–116
 - Mongke Khan (1251–1259), 1:115
 - overview of, 1:115–117
 - parallelism of double officers and appointments, 1:116
 - political factionalism, 1:3–4
 - rulers of, 2:259
- Yuan society
- China under the Mongols, 1:118
 - Khubilai Khan, 1:117, 118
 - northern China, conquest of, 1:117
 - overview of, 1:117–119
 - reunited China, 1:117, 118
 - Yuan term, 1:118
- Yunnan
- Confucianism, 2:209
 - current status of, 2:210
 - defeat of the Dali state, 2:209
 - importance of, 2:210
 - incorporation into China, 2:209
 - independent states of, 2:208–209
 - legacy of the Mongol construction of Yunnan, 2:210
 - location of, 2:208
 - Muslim communities, 2:209
 - overview of, 2:163, 208–210
 - Prince Khubilai and, 2:209
 - Sayyid Ajall's administration, 2:209
 - uniqueness of, 2:209
- Yurt (*ger*)
- construction of, 2:157
 - current status of, 2:157
 - disassembly of, 2:158
 - door of, 2:157
 - etiquette concerning, 2:159
 - felt, 2:157
 - during hot weather, 2:157
 - interior order of, 2:159
 - interiors of, 2:158
 - outline of downtown Ulaanbaatar and, 2:159
 - overview of, 2:121–122, 157–159
 - photograph of, 2:158
 - size and owner status, 2:158, 159
 - white felt, 2:157, 158

- during winter, 2:157
- of wives, 2:159
- Zhangzong (r. 1189–1208), 2:177
- Zhao Gong, 2:153
- Zhao Hong on Mongol horses, 2:136
- Zhiguan* meditation, 1:256
- Zhiyi (538–597), 1:256
- Zhongdu
 - Chinggis Khan's attacks on, 2:211
 - the chronicler Juzjani's account of the capture of Zhongdu (1214), 2:218–219
 - depiction of Samuqa besieging Zhongdu, 2:212
 - destruction of, 2:94
 - Jin Empire and, 2:211, 212
 - location of, 2:210
 - overview of, 2:162, 210–213
 - population of, 2:210
 - siege of, 2:211–212
 - significance of the fall of, 2:212
 - surrender to the Mongols, 2:212
- Zhongshu ling*, 1:7
- Zhu Yuanzhang, 1:257, 2:45

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A Historical Encyclopedia

Volume 2

Timothy May, Editor

Empires of the World



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CONTENTS

VOLUME I

Preface	xiii
Introduction	xv
Chronology	xxv
Government and Politics	1
<i>Overview Essay</i>	<i>1</i>
Daidu	4
Dual Government	6
Government Structure	8
Guyuk's Election (1246)	10
Immigrant Religions in Mongol China	13
<i>Inju</i>	15
Karakorum	17
Khubilai Becomes Khan (May 5, 1260)	20
Mongol Empire, Dissolution of (1260)	22
Nogai (d. 1299)	24
Northern Yuan (1368–1634)	26
<i>Paiza</i>	29
<i>Quriltai</i>	31
Sarai	33
Shamanism	35
Shangdu	37
Sultaniyya	39
Tabriz	42
Temur Khan (r. 1294–1307)	44
Titles	46
Toghon Temur (r. 1333–1370)	48
Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246)	51
Uzbek Khan (1282–1341; r. 1313–1341)	53

Women in the Court	55
<i>Yasa</i>	58
Organization and Administration	61
<i>Overview Essay</i>	61
Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263)	64
Baiju (d. 1260)	67
Blue Horde	69
Chagatai Khanate	71
Golden Horde	73
Il-Khanate	75
<i>Karachi Begs</i>	77
<i>Keshik</i>	79
Khurasan	81
Mahmud Yalavach (d. ca. 1262)	83
Mawarannahr	85
Moghulistan	87
Muqali (1170–1223)	90
<i>Ordo</i>	92
Qasar	94
<i>Tamgha</i>	96
<i>Tammachi</i>	97
Taxation	99
Transfer of Authority	101
Tribe	103
<i>Ulus</i>	106
Writing Systems	108
<i>Yam</i>	110
Yelu Chucai (1189–1243)	113
Yuan Empire (1265–1368)	115
Yuan Society	117
Individuals	121
<i>Overview Essay</i>	121
Abaqa (r. 1265–1282)	124
Abu Said (r. 1317–1335)	126
Batu (1203–1255)	129
Baybars I (1223–1277)	131
Borte (ca. 1161–1230)	134
Chabi Khatun (d. 1281)	136
Chagatai Khan (d. 1242)	138
Chinggis Khan (1164–1227)	140
Choban (d. 1327)	143
Doquz Khatun (d. 1265)	146

Ghazan (1271–1304, r. 1295–1304)	148
Guyuk (r. 1246–1248)	150
Hoelun (d. ca. 1210)	153
Hulegu (1217–1265)	155
Ibn Battuta (1304–1369)	157
Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah (r. 1221–1230)	159
Jochi (d. 1225)	162
Khubilai Khan (1215–1294)	164
Mongke Khan (1209–1259, r. 1251–1259)	166
Oghul Qaimish Khatun (d. 1251)	169
Ogodei Khan (1186–1241)	171
Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316)	173
Orghina Khatun (d. 1261)	176
Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324)	178
Qaidu (1230–1301)	180
Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252)	183
Timur-i Leng (1336–1405)	186
Tolui Khan (1191–1232)	189
Toqtamysh (d. 1406)	191
Groups and Organizations	193
<i>Overview Essay</i>	193
Alans	197
The Assassins (1090–1256 CE)	199
Forest People	202
Franciscans	204
Italians	206
Jews	209
Jurchen	212
<i>Juyin</i>	214
Kereit	215
Khitan	217
Kipchaks	220
Mamluks	222
Merkit	225
Naiman	227
Nestorian Christians	229
Oirat	231
Onggirad	233
Onggud	235
<i>Ortoq</i>	237
Sakya Buddhists	240
Semuren	242
Sufis	244

Tangut	247
Tatars	249
Uyghurs	251
Uzbeks	254
White Lotus Buddhists	255
Index	259

VOLUME 2

Key Events	1
<i>Overview Essay</i>	1
Alan Goa and the Arrow Parable	4
Baljuna Covenant (1203)	6
Black Death (Mid-14th Century)	8
Chinggis Exchange	11
Chinggis Khan, Death of (1227)	13
Crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249)	16
Europe, Invasion of (1240–1241)	18
Hethum, King of Cilicia (r. 1226–1269), Submission of	20
Japan, Invasion of (1274, 1280)	22
Jin Empire, Fall of the (1234)	25
John of Plano Carpini, Journey of (1180–1252)	27
Kulikovo Pole, Battle of (1380)	29
Mongol Conversion to Islam	32
Otrar Massacre (1218)	35
Peace of Qatwan (1267)	37
<i>Quriltai</i> of 1206	39
Rabban Sawma, Mission of (1286–1288)	41
Red Turban Revolt (1340s–1368)	44
Shiremun's Coup (1250)	46
Tarmashirin, Overthrow of (1334)	48
Tatar Yoke	50
Teb Tenggeri, Death of (1206)	52
Toluid Revolution (1250)	54
William of Rubruck, Journey of (1253–1255)	56
Yesugei, Death of (ca. 1174/1175)	58
Military	61
<i>Overview Essay</i>	61
<i>Alginchi</i>	64
Ankara, Battle of (1402)	67
Armor	68
Ayn Jalut, Battle of (1260)	70

Baghdad, Siege of (1258)	72
Caizhou, Siege of (1233–1234)	75
Cannon	77
Chakirmaut, Battle of (1204)	79
<i>Cherik</i>	81
Chormaqan Noyan (ca. 1200–1240)	83
Decimal Organization	85
Gunpowder	87
Irtys River, Battle of the (1209)	89
Java, Invasion of (1292–1293)	91
Kaifeng, Siege of (1233)	93
Kalka River, Battle of the (1223)	95
Kose Dag, Battle of (1243)	97
Liegnitz, Battle of (1241)	99
Mohi, Battle of (April 1241)	102
Siege Warfare	105
Subedei (1176–1248)	107
Tactics	110
<i>Tamma</i>	112
Trebuchet	114
Tsunami Strategy	116
Weapons	118
Objects and Artifacts	121
<i>Overview Essay</i>	121
Calendar	124
Clothes	127
Five Snouts	130
Great Wall	132
Horse	135
Kumiss	137
Medicine	140
Money	142
<i>Onggon</i>	144
Pasta	146
<i>The Secret History of the Mongols</i>	148
<i>Shengwu qinzheng lu</i>	150
<i>Tenggeri</i>	152
<i>Yinshan zhengyao</i> (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink) (1330)	155
Yurt	157
Key Places	161
<i>Overview Essay</i>	161

Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258)	164
Antioch, Principality of	167
Delhi Sultanate	174
Jin Empire (1125–1234)	176
Kara Khitai (1125–1218)	179
Khwarazmian Empire (1097–1224)	182
Kipchak Steppes	184
Koryo (935–1392)	187
Lithuania	189
Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)	191
Samarkand	193
Song Empire (960–1279)	195
Sultanate of Rum	197
Trebizond	200
Uyghuristan	202
Xi Xia (1038–1227)	204
Xiangyang, Siege of (1267–1273)	206
Yunnan	208
Zhongdu	210
Primary Documents	215
1. Ibn al-Athir on the Mongol Invasion of the Islamic World (Early 13th Century)	215
2. Ibn al-Athir on Mongol Invasions of the Near East (Early 13th Century)	216
3. Robert of Clari's Description of the Kipchaks (ca. 1205)	218
4. The Chronicler Juzjani's Account of the Capture of Zhongdu (1214)	218
5. Account of the Otrar Massacre (1219)	219
6. Chinggis Khan's Invitation to the Daoist Monk K'iu Ch'ang Ch'un (May 15, 1219)	220
7. Description of the <i>Boqta</i> Headdress of Mongolian Women (ca. 1219)	221
8. Excerpt from Wu-ku-sun Chung Tuan's Account of His Embassy to Chinggis Khan in Central Asia (ca. 1220)	222
9. Chinggis Khan's Oration at the Sack of Bukhara (ca. 1220)	223
10. A Description of Mawarannahr by Yelu Chucai (ca. 1220)	224
11. Jalal al-Din Requests Help against the Mongols (ca. 1230)	225
12. John of Plano Carpini's Description of the Mongols (1240s)	225
13. John of Plano Carpini's Description of Mongol Armor (1240s)	226

14. John of Sarrasin's Letter to Nicholas of Arrode Describing a Mongol Ploy (June 23, 1249)	227
15. Description of Prince Alexander Nevsky from the <i>Nikonian Chronicle</i> (1250s)	228
16. William of Rubruck Enjoys Kumiss (1250s)	228
17. William of Rubruck's Description of Mongke's Drinking Fountain (1250s)	229
18. William of Rubruck's Account of the Distinctive Mongol Hairstyle (1250s)	230
19. William of Rubruck's Description of Yurts (1250s)	231
20. Matthew Paris on the Fear Provoked by the Approach of the Mongols (1250s)	232
21. Ch'ang Te's Description of the Assassins (1250s)	232
22. Letter of Mongke to King Louis IX of France (1250s)	233
23. Description of William of Rubruck's Audience with Mongke Khan (May 31, 1254)	234
24. Bar Hebraeus on the Fall of Baghdad and the Abbasid Caliphate (1258)	235
25. Marco Polo's Account of the Fall of Baghdad (1258)	235
26. Letter of Hulegu to King Louis IX of France (1262)	236
27. Marco Polo's Account of the Siege of Xiangyang (1273)	237
28. Rabban Sawma's Account of the Election of Yahba Allah III as <i>Catholicus</i> of the Eastern Church (1281)	238
29. Marco Polo's Account of Nayan's Rebellion against Khubilai Khan (1287)	239
30. Marco Polo on the Women of Khubilai Khan's Court (ca. 1298)	240
31. Marco Polo's Description of China's Countryside (1298)	241
32. Marco Polo on Khubilai Khan's Palace (1298)	242
33. Marco Polo on Paper Money in China (ca. 1300)	243
34. Marco Polo on Mongol Warriors in the 13th Century (ca. 1300)	245
35. Marco Polo's Description of the City of Daidu (ca. 1300)	247
36. Marco Polo's Description of Khubilai Khan Hunting (ca. 1300)	248
37. Marco Polo's Description of Chinese Ships (ca. 1300)	249
38. Marco Polo's Description of Mongol Shamanism (ca. 1300)	250

39. Marco Polo's Account of Khubilai Khan's Hunting Park at Shangdu (ca. 1300)	251
40. Marco Polo's Account of the Assassins (ca. 1300)	252
41. An Armenian Account of the Mongols' Divine Right to Rule (Early 14th Century)	253
42. Passage from <i>Jami'u't-Tawarikh</i> (Compendium of Chronicles) in Which Chinggis Khan Explains the Best Things in Life (Early 14th Century)	254
43. Letter from Ghazan, Ruler of the Il-Khanate, to Pope Boniface VIII (April 1302)	254
44. Rabban Sawma's Account of the Meeting of Oljeitu and Mar Yahba Allah (1304)	255
45. Marco Polo on Mongol Customs (ca. 1324)	256
46. Gilles Li Muisis's Account of the Black Death at the Siege of Kaffa (1347)	257
47. Account of Samarkand under Timur-i Leng (ca. 1403–1406)	257
48. Account of the Battle of the Ugra River from the <i>Nikonian Chronicle</i> (1480)	258
Appendix: Rulers	259
Glossary	263
Bibliography	269
Editor and Contributors	285
Index	287

KEY EVENTS

OVERVIEW ESSAY

As with any empire, certain key events shaped the Mongol Empire. These events not only shifted the course of history but also shaped the identity of the empire. Some of the key events can be easily pinpointed. Others, however, are events or movements that took place over several years or even decades.

Of prime importance are the legendary events described in the parable of Alan Goa and the arrow. Alan Goa was the legendary mother of the Mongols. Her sons, born from both human and divine fathers, gave rise to the Mongols. Her story describes a reoccurring trend in Mongolian history. In the arrow parable, Alan Goa taught her sons the importance of unity, which they then ignore only to rediscover it after hardship. It is a theme that intertwines with the history of the Mongol Empire throughout its duration.

Not surprisingly, many of the foundational events for the Mongol Empire occurred during the lifetime of and directly involved the empire's founder, Chinggis Khan. One such event was the death of Yesugei, Chinggis Khan's father, in about 1174–1175. Yesugei's death not only left Chinggis Khan without a father but ultimately left his mother and family in dire straits and largely abandoned by other Mongols. The hard times caused by Yesugei's untimely death proved to be the crucible in which Temujin, the man who would become Chinggis Khan, developed much of his outlook on leadership, life, and the nature of Mongolian society in general.

Chinggis Khan's rise to dominance was rarely easy, and several events laid the foundation for the future development of the Mongol Empire. The Baljuna Covenant was one such event. After being defeated by the Kereit in 1203, Chinggis Khan's forces regrouped at Lake Baljuna. There, Chinggis Khan and his leading companions made a covenant that not only rallied them to defeat the Kereit but also laid the foundations of the empire. The individuals who took part in the oaths at Baljuna became luminaries in the creation of the Mongol Empire and also came to loom large in Mongol legend.

With the defeat of the Kereit in 1203 and the Naiman in 1204, the Mongolian plateau was now secure. Two years later, Chinggis Khan was enthroned at the *quriltai* of 1206, which was important not only for officially establishing Chinggis Khan as the ruler of Mongolian steppes but also for the establishment of the Yeke Monggol Ulus (Great Mongol State). It is at this *quriltai* that the military and society were arranged in decimal fashion, obliterating the old tribal lines that caused so much turmoil. Furthermore, the state was organized such that many of those who made the Baljuna Covenant benefited from it.

Although the dynasty of 1206 enthroned Chinggis Khan as the ruler of the Mongolian plateau, this did not mean that his throne was secure. External threats from nomadic leaders who fled from him still posed challenges, although the most dire threat came from within. Teb Tenggeri was a shaman with close ties to Chinggis Khan's family that preceded the death of Yesugei. Teb Tenggeri confirmed that the Mongke Koke Tenggeri (Eternal Blue Sky) favored Chinggis Khan and legitimized Chinggis Khan's authority. Due to Chinggis Khan's favor, Teb Tenggeri began to exert influence within the realm and also to assert his own authority. His actions soon challenged Chinggis Khan's power. Only with the death of Teb Tenggeri in 1206 did his threat to destabilize Chinggis Khan's rule vanish.

The Mongols then began to expand in earnest, invading Xi Xia, the Jin Empire, and even Kara Khitai. It is often thought that the Mongols intended to conquer the world. There is little actual evidence for this idea, because Chinggis Khan's actions were often reactions to threats. For example, only the rash actions of one official in a remote border town caused the Mongols to invade Central Asia and the Middle East. The Otrar Massacre in 1218 triggered Mongol expansion in a way that other wars did not.

Needless to say, the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227 was an event of epic proportions. His death led not only to the question of succession but also to a consideration of the nature of the empire. Was it to be simply the empire of one man or the establishment of a dynasty? His accomplishments dwarfed those of anyone before him or since, making it difficult for anyone to rule in his shadow. With his death, his heirs and the Mongol state had to wrestle with the issue of choosing a successor and also with questions concerning the legacy of Chinggis Khan and the establishment of the Mongol Empire.

The war with the Jin Empire began in 1211 during the lifetime of Chinggis Khan. However, the fall of the Jin Empire did not occur until 1234, seven years after the death of Chinggis Khan. During 20 years of conflict with the Jin, the Mongols switched from raiding their empire to outright conquests. In many ways, the war served as a laboratory not only for warfare but also for how to incorporate the conquered into the empire. When the conquest was completed, Mongol armies were freed to undertake the westward expansion that eventually led to the invasion of Europe.

As a result of that invasion, a call went out across Europe for a crusade against the Mongols. Unlike other crusades, where Europeans invaded territory ruled by Muslims or pagans (e.g., in the Baltic region), these crusades were strictly a defensive action against the overwhelming impact of the Mongol devastation of Poland and Hungary. Even while the papacy and the kingdoms of Europe braced for another invasion, some crowned heads sought to determine the Mongols' intentions. It was toward this end that the mission of John of Plano Carpini was directed. "Mission" was the proper term because not only did he carry out the diplomatic mission of determining the Mongols' intent, but he also was supposed to convert the Mongols if possible. Finally, he also carried out a mission of espionage and wrote the first Western account of the Mongol court as well as information about Mongol society and military forces.

One of the greatest events in the Mongol Empire was the Toluid Revolution of 1250, when the heirs of Tolui seized the throne from the line of Ogodei. While the initial

stages of the revolution were peaceful, with Mongke gaining the throne through the *qurilitai* process, Shiremun's Coup changed that. When Shiremun, Mongke's cousin, attempted to seize the throne, his actions unleashed a purge that devastated the line of Ogodei along with its supporters across the empire. With the throne secured for the line of Tolui, Khubilai became the next great khan, although his rule was not uncontested.

As with all Mongol rulers, Khubilai Khan also sought to expand the empire. In part, this was done to demonstrate his legitimacy as well as carry out the mandate that the Mongols should rule the world. While the invasion of Europe demonstrated Mongol power, the invasions of Japan in 1274 and 1280 showed that there were limits even for the Mongols.

Although warfare was endemic after the dissolution of the empire, peace could be achieved as was done in 1267 with the Peace of Qatwan in which the Golden Horde, the Chagatai Khanate, and the House of Qaidu came to an agreement. Yet, even then the peace was not what it seemed. Ultimately, it was a ploy for Qaidu to lead the Ogodeyid Ulus back to greatness. It also played a role in keeping the Chagatai Khanate in disarray.

When the Black Plague swept across Eurasia in the mid-14th century, it was an equal opportunity disease. Social rank, wealth, or geographic location did not guarantee safety. Most historical works dealing with the Black Plague focus on its impact on Europe. This is but a small picture. The Black Plague not only originated in the Mongol Empire but also impacted it in ways different from the European experience and may have played a key role in the collapse of Mongol authority in some regions. There is some consideration that the Black Plague even played a role in accelerating the Red Turban Rebellions that led to the downfall of the Yuan Empire in China and the rise of the Ming dynasty.

Among the many changes that occurred in the 14th century was the conversion to Islam of much of the empire. Although the Golden Horde had the first Muslim ruler in Berke, the Il-Khanate was the first successor of the united Mongol Empire to make Islam a state religion. The Golden Horde followed suit not long after. While Muslims existed in the Yuan Empire, Islam was rarely a key factor there. For the Chagatai Khanate, the conversion to Islam took place in some parts of the empire, but it was not completely welcomed. Tarmashirin's overthrow was directly tied to his policy of spreading Islam throughout his domains, but other factors played a role as well.

Not all of the events discussed in this section are directly about the Mongols. One such event was minor in the larger view of history, but it nonetheless had a vast impact on the Middle East. This was the submission of Hethum, the king of Cilicia. His submission offered a brief opportunity for Christendom to forge an alliance with the Mongols. It also, however, brought about the rapid destruction of his kingdom as well as the crusader state known as the Principality of Antioch. While those who voluntarily submitted to the Mongols could reap great benefits, there were also risks.

Efforts to establish an alliance between Christendom and the Mongol Empire did not end with Hethum's efforts, however. Even as King Hethum appeared in the court of Mongke, another traveler also secretly investigated the possibility of an alliance, for this

was the mission of William of Rubruck. While William openly admitted that he was there to convert the Mongols, he secretly was an envoy for King Louis IX of France, who sought Mongol aid against the Muslims in Syria and Egypt. Ultimately, William concluded that such an alliance could not take place because the Mongols sought to rule the world.

The dream did not die, however. With the dissolution of the Mongol Empire, four Mongol states emerged. While claims to universal conquest still remained, the ability to do so was limited particularly as civil war dominated their borders. As a result, the Il-Khanate sought an ally to conquer Syria and Egypt. The exploration of this possibility was the mission of Rabban Sawma. Like William of Rubruck, however, he found that while interest remained, the reality of achieving such an alliance was unlikely.

While most events discussed here were real, another is quasi-imagined. The concept of the Tatar Yoke looms large in history—the idea that Mongol oppression held back progress in Russia for hundreds of years. While Mongol rule could be harsh, it was not necessarily regressive. The Tatar Yoke did not take place, at least not in the way that it was imagined. Nonetheless, the concept has shaped our understanding, or at least our imagined understanding, of history for approximately a century. A key part of the Tatar Yoke was that the Russians liberated themselves from the Mongols, beginning with the Battle of Kulikovo Pole in 1380. While Prince Dmitri of Moscow won a victory, it was far from liberation. That would have to wait another 100 years.

One of the most significant events of the Mongol Empire is the Chinggis Exchange, which perhaps more than any other single event embodies the legacy of the empire. The Chinggis Exchange is the exchange of goods, technology, people, and ideas across Eurasia through the conduit of the Mongol Empire, which some have described as a medieval information superhighway. This exchange played a key role not only in transforming the cultures within the Mongol Empire but also in impacting those beyond its borders. Some of the ramifications of the Chinggis Exchange continue today.

Alan Goa and the Arrow Parable

Alan Goa provides not only the origins of the major Mongol clans but also the moral foundation for them, as illustrated in *The Secret History of the Mongols*. The Mongols and many other tribes, according to legend, were the result of the pairing of a wolf and a fallow deer. They produced one son, Batachi Khan. Ten generations later, Du'a Soqor and Dobun Mergen were born. Du'a Soqor, as shaman, gifted with a talent for prophecy, assisted his younger brother, Dobun Mergen, in procuring a wife. While on top of the holy mountain of Burqan Khaldun, Du'a Soqor saw or perhaps had a vision of a group of people traveling toward them. This included a beautiful girl named Alan Goa (Alan the Beautiful). Having ascertained that she was not betrothed to anyone else, Du'a Soqor successfully negotiated for her to become the bride of Dobun Mergen.

Their union produced two sons, Bugunutei and Belgunutei. In their youth, Dobun Mergen also acquired a young servant from the Bayaud tribe while hunting. Dobun

Mergen had shot a deer, and while returning home he encountered a poor and distressed man, Ma'aliq, and his son. In exchange for a haunch of meat, Ma'aliq gave Dobun Mergen his son. Not long after he returned to his wife and children, Dobun Mergen died.

After his passing Alan Goa conceived and gave birth to three more sons named Buqu Qadagi, Buqatu Salji, and Bodonchar. Not surprisingly, her two sons grow suspicious and accused their mother of sleeping with a slave. She denies this and explains that a “Yellow Man” comes through the smoke hole of their yurt and enters her belly; he then leaves the yurt again through the smoke hole. On his exit, however, he is transformed into a yellow dog. The implication, she tells her children, is clear—heaven has favored her and caused her pregnancy. The three sons are of divine nature.

She further lectures all of her children on the importance of unity. To this end she gathered five arrows and handed one to each son and ordered them to attempt to break the arrow. All five broke their respective arrows with ease. She then took five arrows and bundled them together with a thong. She then ordered them to break the arrows. Each son attempted to snap the bundled arrows but failed. This, she explained was the lesson. If they stand alone they could be defeated, but if they remained as brothers united no one could overcome them.

Thus united, the family thrived, but with the death of Alan Goa, the children, now adults, forgot their mother's lesson and went their separate ways. The sons divided the property but excluded the youngest son, Bodonchar, as they viewed him as dim-witted. Left to his own devices, he caught and trained a falcon to hunt geese and ducks. Eventually he came across another group of people near the Tunggelik Stream, the same location where his mother was encountered by Du'a Soqor and Dobun Mergen. Although he interacted with them, he largely kept to himself. Then one day his brother Buqu Qatagi went looking for Bodonchar. He too came across the people near the Tunggelik Stream and inquired about his brother. Those people simply told him that a man did come to visit them and drank kumiss with them but would always leave at night. No one knew where he slept. They told Buqu Qatagi to wait, and the man would probably appear. So Buqu Qatagi waited and was soon rewarded, as Bodonchar rode toward the Tunggelik Stream camp. The two then rode off to the Onon River. Bodonchar explained to his brother that the Tunggelik people had no leaders and that they should take them over. Buqu Qatagi gathered the other brothers and agreed to Bodonchar's plan. They successfully seized the camp. Their children then became the forefathers of the various Mongol clans and tribes. Bodonchar, who was perceived to be the dimmest in wit, demonstrated to his brothers how they could become the lords of the people. Furthermore, Bodonchar exemplified the Parable of the Five Arrows. Alone the five brothers were nothing of note. Once united, they captured people and made themselves lords over all and established the aristocracy of the Mongol world.

According to tradition, a number of Mongol tribes came from the five sons of Alan Goa. Furthermore, the Mongols were divided into two groups, the Niru'un and the Durlukin. The most important and highest in terms of hierarchy came from Buqu Qadagi, Buqatu Salji, and Bodonchar—those who had a heavenly father—although some Mongols believed that any tribe descended from the womb of Alan Goa was

NIRU'UN, DURLUKIN, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Niru'un came from the ancestress Alan Goa and other legendary figures in the Mongolian oral tradition. Niru'un means "backbone," and thus they were the backbone of the Mongol tribal social structure and served as the aristocracy. Exogamous marriage practices meant that the Niru'un men typically married women from the Durlukin tribes and clans who were considered commoners. They also sought exogamous marriages of women from the Niru'un clans.

Numbers are somewhat difficult to determine. There were at least 15 Durlukin clans among the Mongols that were of the Negus lineage, including the Onggirad, Olqunu'ud, and Qongqotan clans. Similarly, the exact number of Niru'un clans remains uncertain, although 20 of them traced their lineage to the Kiyad clan, to which Yesugei and Chinggis Khan belonged. Other lineages also existed.

The Niru'un were the aristocrats in Mongolia society, which meant that they could vie for the title of khan and leadership of all the Mongols. The Durlukin, however, included many free tribes such as the Onggirad and Qonqotan who had their own leaders. However, as they were not from the Niru'un lineage, it was unlikely that they could achieve dominance over other Mongols.

Niru'un. The Durlukin were the commoners. Buqu Qadagi begat the Qataqin, while Buqatu Salji founded the Salji'ud. The Borjigid, or tribe of Chinggis Khan, came from Bodonchar.

The story of Alan Goa and the parable of the arrows manifested later among the Mongols in a variety of forms, with Hoelun, Temujin's mother, exhorting her own children with it when they quarreled after the death of their father, Yesugei. Chinggis Khan also used the idea for his sons and descendants along with other motifs that stressed unity. Today during the annual Naadam, or summer festival in July, the story is reenacted.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Hoelun; *Key Events:* Chinggis Khan, Death of; Yesugei, Death of

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Baljuna Covenant (1203)

The Baljuna Covenant is an oath taken by Chinggis Khan's most loyal supporters in 1203. After his initial defeat by Toghril Ong Khan in 1203, Temujin regrouped at Lake

Baljuna. Here, he and his followers swore stylized oaths pledging service and loyalty to each other regardless of the circumstances. They then rallied and made a daring attack on Toghril's camp, defeating the Kereit. With this victory, Temujin then went on to unite Mongolia under his banner and become Chinggis Khan. Those who were with him at Baljuna became important figures in the Mongol Empire.

While the Baljuna Covenant looms large in the early history of the Mongol Empire, it is not certain how much of it is true. The details are murky, but the fact that it continued to be mentioned in later sources indicates that it did occur. We can be certain that Temujin was defeated by the Kereit in the Battle of Qalqajit Sands. It also seems clear that he had established Lake Baljuna as a rallying point. His situation was tenuous, and Lake Baljuna was a considerable distance from Qalqajit Sands. Not only was he defeated, but he also suffered heavy losses. Additionally, his son Ogodei along with two of his earliest and most loyal companions, Bo'orchu and Boroghul, were missing. Fortunately, all three appeared the day after the Mongols retreated. Bo'orchu's horse had been killed, so he had to hide and then steal a horse. Meanwhile, Boroghul rescued and tended to Ogodei, who had suffered a neck wound in the battle. Only after these three rejoined the main Mongol force did Temujin withdraw to Lake Baljuna; scholars remain uncertain as to its location.

While at Lake Baljuna, Temujin gathered reinforcements and rested his troops. The reinforcements included the Onggirad, as Temujin reminded them of their marriage alliance. A few other groups such as the Ikires and Qorolas also joined Temujin at Lake Baljuna. While they augmented his forces, a few others such as Temujin's uncle Altan deserted to the Kereit. Desertions, however, were few compared to those who joined him, demonstrating that most still viewed Temujin as a good leader. Undoubtedly, they were also concerned that if Temujin was defeated, then Toghril Ong Khan would be able to assert Kereit dominion over them as well.

Of equal importance was that at Lake Baljuna, Temujin also attracted support from outside of Mongolia. Initially it was not significant but would later yield fruit. The outsiders included two Muslim merchants from Central Asia: Jafar and Hasan. Hasan appeared with 1,000 sheep en route to Siberia to trade for furs. Both entered Temujin's service. With such a large flock of animals, the merchant surely had a retinue of men not only to help with controlling the animals but also to thwart perspective rustlers as well as wolves. At the same time, Temujin's forces would have outnumbered any force that Hasan had. Yet, there is no evidence that Temujin forcibly took the sheep to feed his army. Instead, he apparently agreed to assist Jafar and Hasan in their commercial ventures and provide protection for them in his territories.

Another who joined Temujin at Baljuna was the Uyghur Chinqai, who became a high-ranking civil administrator in the Mongol Empire. Chinqai deserted the Kereit to join the Mongols, and he was not the only one to do so. Temujin's brother, Jochi Qasar, who fought on the side of the Kereit, also rejoined Temujin. Additionally some Khitan also joined. Why some of the Kereit deserted remains elusive, but it is possible that they did not trust Toghril Ong Khan after he incited a war with Temujin, who previously had been his vassal. If Toghril attacked such an important figure, why would they believe that he would honor their positions and property? Emphasizing this point,

Temujin also sent a message back to Toghrlil questioning why he attacked him when Temujin had shown nothing but loyalty to Toghrlil. Temujin reminded Toghrlil of all of his actions, including how he helped Toghrlil regain his throne.

With his men resting and his forces reinforced, Temujin gathered his trusted companions together. He explained to them that they would go back and fight the Kereit again—they had little choice. It was fight the Kereit now or be hunted down one by one, as their fates were intertwined. Temujin then swore an oath: “When I have completed this great task I will share the bitter and sweet fruits with you. If I break my word, may I become as the waters of the Baljuna” (Ratchnevsky 1992). He and his followers then drank the muddy waters of Lake Baljuna. With this oath, Temujin’s army was united and then made a surprise attack on the Kereit, defeating them and sending Toghrlil fleeing into western Mongolia, where he was killed by the Naiman.

Oaths such as that made at Baljuna were common when different tribes and clans joined together. The oath was meant to form an alliance and ensure that all parties were in agreement. The loyalty of those who remained with Temujin in his defeat touched the Mongol ruler. Loyalty had always been a prominent trait that Temujin admired. Those who stayed by him received high honors later, particularly at the *quriltai* of 1206. What is notable is that other than Jochi Qasar, all of those gathered were not Borjigin Mongols, demonstrating the importance of loyalty over ties of kinship. Those who took the oath were known as the Baljunatus, meaning “Muddy Water Drinkers,” and they and their families were given special merit in the eyes of Chinggis Khan and his descendants.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kereit; Naiman; Onggirad; *Key Events:* *Quriltai* of 1206

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Black Death (Mid-14th Century)

The plague epidemic known as the Black Death occurred from 1346 to 1353, decimating populations from Asia to the Middle East, Europe, and North Africa. The disease is believed to have spread along trade routes established during the preceding century by the Mongol Empire. Plague is caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis*, which causes three

forms of infection known as bubonic, pneumonic, and septicemic. The combination of Mongol expansion and increased trade activity is believed to have brought caravan routes into contact with the disease and infected black rats, whose fleas served as the vector through which plague spread to human populations. During the Black Death, between a third and a half of the populations of Europe, North Africa, and parts of the Middle East perished, while some provinces in China suffered up to 90 percent mortality rates. The epidemic's economic impact was even more far reaching, as the collapse in gold prices that followed in its wake directly resulted in the collapse of empires in West and East Africa. Following the initial outbreak in the mid-14th century, plague continued to reappear intermittently in affected regions until the advent of antibiotics in the 20th century.

The most common form of infection during the Black Death was bubonic plague, which was transmitted through fleabites and infected the host's lymphatic system. As such, person-to-person transmission was practically nonexistent. Bubonic plague causes the formation of buboes on the lymph nodes nearest the location of the initial infection—generally the neck, armpits, or groin. The mortality rate of bubonic plague is generally between 30 and 75 percent, making it the least deadly of the three forms. Unlike bubonic plague, pneumonic plague occurs when *Y. pestis* infects the respiratory system and can therefore be transmitted from person to person without the presence of a vector such as the rat flea. This form of plague causes symptoms similar to pneumonia and, in addition to progressing faster than bubonic plague, which takes several days to claim its victim, has a higher mortality rate of around 90–95 percent. Though rare in Europe, pneumonic plague was prevalent in parts of the Middle East and North Africa. The final type of plague, septicemic, is fatal in nearly 100 percent of cases and occurs when *Y. Pestis* enters the bloodstream. This type of infection kills within hours, often before symptoms occur. For this type of infection, the bacterium generally must enter the body directly through a cut or wound, thereby making it incredibly rare.

The geographic origin of the 14th-century plague outbreak continues to be a subject of debate among historians. The most widely accepted explanation is that the Mongols encountered the disease in Southeast Asia, where it is endemic, and inadvertently carried it north to China, from where it spread eastward into Central Asia, Russia, and the Middle East. Others point to the Central Asian steppe, whose marmots serve as hosts and carriers of the disease. Some scientists, including Nobel laureate Francis Crick, have argued that initial infection was caused by cosmic dust, which fell to Earth from a passing extraterrestrial object, such as a comet. Following this vertical transmission, reservoirs of contagion were established and disseminated horizontally through trade networks.

Though the exact origins of the Black Death are contested, there is a general consensus regarding the plague's transmission to Europe, where it spread after being introduced to Italy from the Genoese trading port of Kaffa in the Crimea. During the height of the Mongol Empire, Kaffa had risen in status from a small fishing village to a primary commercial port for the exchange of goods between Asia and Europe. The Genoese enjoyed exclusive trading rights, granted by the khans of the Golden Horde. However,

as a result of religious and economic tensions between the Genoese and the newly Islamicized Golden Horde, the khan Janibeg attacked the Genoese trading station at Tana on the Sea of Azov. Pursued by Mongol forces, the Genoese retreated to Kaffa. While laying siege to the city, plague broke out among Janibeg's troops. According to the Italian chronicler Gabriele de Mussis, the Mongols proceeded to catapult bodies of plague victims over the city's walls in an attempt at biological warfare. While the veracity of this account is questionable, the plague did quickly break out among the inhabitants of Kaffa. With his troops decimated by the disease, Janibeg lifted the siege. Hoping to escape both the Mongols and the plague, the remaining Genoese fled to their ships and set course for Italy. When the ships arrived in Sicily, plague had already claimed most of the merchants on board. From Sicily, the plague rapidly spread north along Europe's internal trade routes.

Around the same time, plague appears to have traveled along the Mongols' southern trade routes across Central Asia, into the Middle East and North Africa. Major cities such as Damascus and Cairo lost up to half of their populations in the initial outbreak. In Cairo specifically, an estimated 200,000 people perished in just six months. Successive virulent outbreaks continued to decimate Egypt's population until the early 16th century, when the plague finally subsided, only to appear again in 1619 and 1835.

In addition to claiming up to 100 million lives, the Black Death wrought significant economic upheavals across Eurasia. In Western Europe, tenant farmers saw wages increase significantly, leading to a major transformation in the landholding system. Outside of Europe, intercontinental trade routes suffered considerably, especially as people—fearing that death was imminent—flooded the market with their gold savings, leading to massive deflation, the collapse of the gold market, and the disappearance of many long-distance trade routes. Though localized plague outbreaks continued to appear intermittently until the modern period, none would challenge the mortality rates suffered during the Black Death itself.

Stephanie Honchell

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Key Events:* Chinggis Exchange; *Primary Documents:* Document 46

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Chinggis Exchange

The shift in technology, ideas, culture, religion, warfare, and other aspects caused by the Mongol Empire is known as the Chinggis Exchange. When Chinggis Khan died in 1227, his empire was vast but still growing. During the next 32 years his successors continued to develop according to the founder's behest. They expanded the empire physically and refined its organization. In the process, they produced a remarkable imperial structure that grafted the best that East and West had to offer onto a Mongol foundation. Simultaneously, with political restructuring, the Mongols also engendered a common imperial culture, one that persisted even when Chinggis Khan's original empire had devolved into successor states, often antagonistic to one another.

Mongol court culture gradually seized the imagination of much of the Old World. Subject peoples and many located far beyond Mongolian frontiers rushed to imitate the Mongol elite. They did so in everything from using bows to playing musical instruments and to clothing and hairstyles (the *boqta*) and food. They drank the brandy popularized by the Mongols, for example, in blue and white porcelain cups, the porcelain coming from China but blue in color to recall the Mongols themselves, the Kokes or Blue Mongols. In Iran and Europe, painters began creating compositions that resembled Chinese painting more than previous Iranian or European compositions and began painting in backgrounds, in the Chinese manner, to produce imaginary landscapes. The Chinese brush captured Islam.

Encouraging such developments was an unprecedented exchange of people from many cultures, which has been called the Chinggis Exchange by Dr. Timothy May in his book *The Mongol Conquests in World History*. The Mongols recruited from one end of Eurasia to the other. Thus, Khwarazmians from Central Asia served in China and Khitan, and those from northern China served in Bukhara. Tibetans and Chinese went to Iran. A Parisian goldsmith designed the great tree of life dispensing liquor to imperial guests in Karakorum, the Mongol capital during the last imperial reigns. Chinese, Muslim, and even Tibetan doctors saw to the ruler's health. The Mongols also moved groups as well as individuals. The khan's guard, for example, included troops from almost everywhere, even a force of Russian knights. So many Tatars ended up in Golden Horde Russia that "Tartar," a Turkic dialect form of the name, replaced "Mongol" as the popular name of the dominant group there.

To support their new lifestyle as world conquerors and to secure profits for themselves, the Mongols encouraged a free exchange of goods. In part they did this using their unexampled postal system, the *yam*, which stretched from one end of their empire to the other and allowed goods and information to move more quickly than ever before. They actively participated in long-distance trade themselves in collaboration with merchants, at first exclusively by land but later by seas as well using increasingly important Indian Ocean connections. There they used the same systems of commercial organization that had served the caravan trade but now mounted in ships. How sophisticated the trade became can be seen not only in the record of exotics moved but even in the horse trade from Yemen to China.

Mongol rulers and princes wore the most beautiful cloths available, imported from anywhere in their empire and beyond. They used the best available medicines and spices, even extremely rare ones such as African grains-of-paradise, a rare cardamom. As warriors, they drew upon the best that the Old World had to offer in military technology: Chinese technology was used in Iran, and Middle Eastern technology was used in China. They created an innovative coinage and economic system to support the trade. Few areas escaped their attention, and little was left unchanged.

Such was the exchange not only of goods but also of ideas that anthropologist Eugene Anderson has written about of the establishment of a great Mongolian information superhighway. How this worked in practice can be seen from the examples of medical exchanges. These took place at many levels—mostly the physical movement of medicinals and associated lore, but in the case of China and Iran there was also a physical movement of not only ideas but also medical books. Among the products of the great translation effort of Persian historian Rashid al-Din (1247–1318) was a remarkable encyclopedia, the *Tanksuq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'uuūm-i khitay* (Treasure Book of the Il-Khans on the Sciences and Learning of China). This text, which substantially survives, included not just general discussions of Chinese medicine but also extensive extracts from Chinese sources and even a complete translation of a Chinese pulsing manual. This is the first work in history to attempt to introduce Chinese medicine to a Western audience.

On the Chinese side, there was the Chinese-language encyclopedia of Arabic medicine *Huihui yaofang* (Muslim Medicinal Recipes). The fragments of this important text, about 15 percent of what once was a major opus of 3,500 pages, now exist in two Ming dynasty copies, one of them highly fragmentary. It is a collection of information on medical theory, including discussions of surgery associated with head wound repair, and thousands of recipes for many conditions, including strokes and even psychiatric conditions. It is the only Chinese work to include Arabic script entries for medicinals, medical authorities such as Galen, and medical technical terms.

Just how intense the relationships involved were can be seen from the existence of such books but also from perhaps less noticeable manifestations. Now lost but once in the Upper Church of San Francesco, Assisi, is a Mongol period depiction of Saint Jerome. And what is he doing? Reading a book printed in the Phags-pa alphabet, the

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?

Both the *Tanksuq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'uuūm-i khitay* and *Huihui yaofang* are to be associated with one remarkable man, the man whom Persian sources call Isa the translator (d. early 14th century). He was a Syrian physician who practiced medicine during the time of the empire and subsequently also traveled back and forth between Mongol Iran and China. The Arabic medical institutions favored by the Mongol court seem to have grown out of his family practice. Thus, one man was primarily responsible for creating a new form of medical practice.

international script instituted by Khubilai Khan to write all languages. Even the Italians of the time must have known about it.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Organization and Administration: Writing Systems; Yam; Individuals: Chinggis Khan; Key Events: Black Death; Chinggis Khan, Death of; Objects and Artifacts: Clothes; Medicine; Money*

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Chinggis Khan, Death of (1227)

Chinggis Khan died on August 18, 1227, in Xi Xia while quelling the Tangut rebellion. During a break in the action Chinggis Khan went hunting. His horse was startled by a wild ass and threw the Mongol khan. The fall did not kill him, but he did suffer internal injuries. Even though Chinggis Khan was unable to participate in the siege, he remained in the camp. His generals insisted that they end the siege of Zhongxing, the capital of Xi Xia, and return to Mongolia until he recovered. Chinggis Khan would have none of that. He insisted that they remain and that should he die, they were to reveal it to no one until the Tangut were destroyed. Although he died before the siege ended, his generals remained ever faithful and carried out his orders. When the king of Xi Xia personally came to the Mongol camp to surrender, Chinggis Khan's commanders maintained the charade. By this time Chinggis Khan had died, but the Tangut king never knew.

Although there is little reason to doubt the account in *The Secret History of the Mongols* of Chinggis Khan's death, numerous other stories appeared after his death, usually tied to the religion of the teller. In a 17th-century Mongolian Buddhist version, Chinggis Khan doesn't die from his fall. Instead, he is murdered by a Tangut princess he takes as a wife after destroying the Tangut. On their wedding night she hid a blade inside herself so that Chinggis Khan grievously wounded himself. In this tale he doesn't quite

die but entered a deep sleep and will awaken at some point in the future when he is needed. The princess threw herself into the Huanghe River and drowned herself, becoming a water spirit. In Armenian versions, he was struck by lightning, a sign of God's vengeance. In various Christian and Muslim versions he dies in battle. Other sources that have their roots in the Mongolian witnesses or court records, such as that by Rashid al-Din, indicate that he died of illness. While they omit his fall while hunting, undoubtedly as it appeared unseemly for a man who conquered on horseback, the rest of the events are the same.

At the time of Chinggis Khan's death, the empire stretched from the forests of Manchuria to the Caspian Sea and from the shores of Lake Baikal to the Huanghe River. Chinggis Khan had conquered more territory in a single lifetime than anyone before him or after. In some ways, his death was inconceivable. After the city of Zhongxing was destroyed, the Mongols made their way back to Mongolia to bury Chinggis Khan.

There are different accounts as to what happened and where he was buried. In one account, while crossing through what is now the Ordos region of Inner Mongolia, People's Republic of China, the cart carrying his remains became stuck in the mud. No matter what was tried, the cart would not move. Interpreted as a sign from Chinggis Khan, they buried him there. It later became the site of a mausoleum, which still functions today. Other stories indicate that the body was returned to Mongolia and buried on Mount Burqan Khaldun. Along the way all witnesses of the funeral procession were killed, and guards were posted to guard the tomb. Which story is correct remains unknown, as no one has found Chinggis Khan's tomb despite numerous efforts to do so.

Chinggis Khan's death left the empire in a bit of a crisis. Although he had named a successor, it was not guaranteed that Ogodei would inherit the throne. Jochi, the eldest son, died in 1225, thus removing him from contention. Chagatai supported Ogodei, but Tolui was less certain. He was a talented general, unlike Ogodei, and served as regent after his father died. There are signs in the sources hinting that Tolui considered taking the throne. With his martial abilities, there is no reason to think that he did not have support. However, a funny thing happened on the way to the funeral: Chinggis Khan became a god.

Whether Chinggis Khan was buried in the Ordos or in northern Mongolia, the journey from Ningxia (the former Xi Xia) was a long process. Over time many considered Chinggis Khan's accomplishments and how the Mongols started from nothing. While the veneration of ancestors was not uncommon among the Mongols, Chinggis Khan became the ancestor of not only his family but also the Yeke Monggol Ulus, the Mongol nation and empire. His soul resided in the *tuq*, and sacrifices and prayers were made to it. Furthermore, his words and actions became the template for proper behavior for the Mongols, or *yosun*, and his laws, or *yasa*, were inviolable.

Because Chinggis Khan selected Ogodei as his successor, it was incontrovertible. Tolui resigned himself to supporting Ogodei. While there may have been grumbling and the *yosun* and *yasa* were not always obeyed, it became common to hold those who did adhere to them as the pillars of society. Furthermore, a common accusation to denounce another was that it strayed from the *yosun* and *yasa*. Nonetheless, this transformation of

THE ALTAN URUGH AND THE CHINGGISID PRINCIPLE

With the rise of Chinggis Khan, the leadership of the nomadic world was forever changed. Chinggis Khan's immediate family became known as the Altan Urugh (Golden Family). Although the brothers and sister of Chinggis Khan were initially included, the dominant element in ranking the members of the Altan Urugh was one's descent from Chinggis Khan and his first wife, Borte. Thus the Chinggisid Principle was born, literally and figuratively. Chinggis Khan had numerous sons and daughters from his nine wives and countless concubines. The Chinggisid Principle would become the defining source for legitimacy of leadership for the Mongol world and the post-Mongol Central Eurasian world. Indeed, the last Chinggisid's reign ended in 1920 when the Bolsheviks conquered the emirates of Bukhara and Khiva. In Kazakhstan and Mongolia lists are still maintained to trace Chinggisid heritage.

While one family now was the legitimate ruling family across much of Eurasia, this was not without problems. Like their illustrious ancestor Chinggis Khan, his sons and grandsons also had many wives. Succession matters could lead to civil war between brother and cousins. Additionally, when rulers proved to be incompetent or perhaps even too powerful, a non-Chinggisid general became kingmaker and attempted to find the most malleable puppet for his needs. This could at times backfire. Over time, even the Chinggisids ran out of heirs to the throne. The Il-Khanate fell in 1335, although some small successor states claiming tenuous links to Chinggis Khan remained in existence. In 1368 the Yuan dynasty, started by Khubilai Khan, was driven out of China by the Ming and back into Mongolia, where other Chinggisids did not give them an exceptionally warm welcome. Meanwhile, the so-called Golden Horde of Russia disintegrated into roughly a half dozen states, all led by Chinggisids in the 1400s.

Chinggis Khan helped stabilize the empire after his death, as it prevented a potential civil war. Furthermore, it helped by giving an identity and ideology to the Mongols. After all, how could Chinggis Khan conquer so much territory if it was not the will of Tenggeri, or heaven?

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Ogodei Khan; Tolui Khan; *Key Places:* Xi Xia

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Crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249)

The initial call for crusades against the Mongols was a direct result of the invasion of Europe in 1241. Originally the crusades (a term not used until the modern era) was a combination of holy war and penance—by fighting the enemies of the faith, one's sins were cleansed. Over the years since the First Crusade (1096–1099), the meaning and purpose of the crusade changed. Rather than going to the Holy Land, one could fight the enemies of Christ (as determined by the Papacy) wherever they were found, including pagans in Eastern Europe or heretics. Furthermore, indulgences (which granted the cleansing of sin for participating in the crusade) were broadened. Initially, only those who journeyed to Jerusalem to liberate it received the indulgence. Then it was extended to those who fought on any front (Spain, Eastern Europe) and eventually granted to not only those who actively fought in the crusades but also to those who provided equipment, money, or even soldiers. Active participation was no longer necessary. Nonetheless, a crusade was something that only the pope could authorize. The Mongol invasion of Europe altered that and reflected much of the existing political tensions within Europe.

With the armies of Hungary and Poland crushed, a cry for a crusade went through Europe. As the Holy Roman Empire seemed to be the next Mongol target, Holy Roman emperor Frederick II (r. 1220–1250) called for a crusade against the Mongols and sent letters to King Louis IX (r. 1226–1270) of France and King Henry III (r. 1216–1272) of England appealing for troops. Louis and Henry did not respond immediately, but while many agreed with Frederick's call, others speculated that Frederick actually orchestrated the Mongol invasion for his own nefarious purposes.

Frederick II had already participated in the crusades. Although he was to participate in the Fifth Crusade (1217–1221), which invaded Egypt, matters at home detained him. He then took part in the Sixth Crusade (1228–1229) after being excommunicated by Pope Gregory IX (r. 1227–1241) for failing to honor the crusading vows he made for the Fifth Crusade. Excommunicates were not permitted to take part in church activities, even crusades. Thus, Frederick's actions were unwelcomed by the Papacy, but there was little anyone could do to prevent Frederick, who also married Isabella II (1212–1228), Queen of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, in 1225. Thus, by marriage Frederick added the Kingdom of Jerusalem to his empire. He then negotiated the return of Jerusalem in 1229, which had been in Muslim hands since Salah al-Din captured the city in 1187. Thus, someone excommunicated from the church was the ruler of the Holy Land and liberated the holy city of Jerusalem. Not only did this embarrass the church, but many others were displeased, as the treaty that returned Jerusalem still permitted Muslims to control the Dome of the Rock and stipulated that fortifications could not be built. Still, it was more than most crusades achieved.

Although Frederick lost authority in the Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1228 when Isabella II died, he claimed regency for their infant son. This was contested by his enemies. Furthermore, his actions as an excommunicate and defiance of the church in general angered Pope Gregory IX, who even called Frederick II as Antichrist, which only encouraged the rumors connecting Frederick II and the Mongols.

FREDERICK AND THE MONGOLS

When the Mongols invaded Europe, many of Holy Roman emperor Frederick II's enemies suspected that he had something to do with it. His reputation had earned him such criticism that he was excommunicated four times in his lifetime. There is little evidence that such things bothered Frederick II. He was a man of many talents and immense intellect who wrote a book on falconry and spoke six languages, including Arabic. He was familiar with Islam from his time in Sicily and having a contingent of Muslims in his army. This certainly did not help his case, but for the *Stupor Mundi* (Wonder of the World) as he was often called, it seemed to only enhance his image.

The Mongols also found Frederick intriguing. As part of their diplomacy they sent Frederick a message that he needed to come and submit to the Mongol Empire and offered him a position in the Mongol court. Frederick joked that he qualified as the khan's falconer.

The official call for a crusade against the Mongols took place in 1241 under Pope Gregory IX, but it accomplished little. Troops gathered primarily to defend the Holy Roman Empire from an invasion that never came. Gregory's successor, Pope Innocent IV (r. 1243–1251), continued the call for a crusade against the Mongols. Although the First Council of Lyons in 1245 discussed many things, a crusade against the Mongols was on the agenda. Innocent took further measures to support an offensive against the Mongols in 1249. He allowed crusaders to fulfill their crusading vows by fighting the Mongols and granted the Teutonic Knights, who carried out most of the crusading actions in Eastern Europe, plenary indulgences for those taking the cross against the Mongols. Thus, one did not have to receive the indulgence from the pope or an archbishop but could simply go to the knights in Prussia or Estonia and receive it from them.

People did not flock to these calls. Several criticized both Frederick and the Papacy for being too involved with their own squabbles to unite against a very real and present danger. In truth, the crusades against the Mongols accomplished nothing. It is notable though that after 1229, the Holy Roman Empire largely stayed out of the crusades in Palestine. While contingents joined other crusades, by and large knights from Central and Eastern Europe remained at home or went to fight pagans in the Baltic region. Their reluctance to go elsewhere can be traced not only to the Baltic being closer but also to the looming Mongol threat. While mass-scale invasion did not occur, Mongol raids from the Golden Horde took place, particularly in Poland.

While the crusades against the Mongols accomplished nothing against the Mongols, they did divert men and money from the crusader states in the Middle East. Furthermore, they continue to influence popular opinion about the Mongols that they were a threat. While their danger cannot be denied, it complicated matters for those, such as King Louis IX, who sought to form alliances with them.

Timothy May

See also: *Key Events:* Europe, Invasion of; John of Plano Carpini, Journey of; *Military:* Liegnitz, Battle of; Mohi, Battle of

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Europe, Invasion of (1240–1241)

Although the Rus' principalities and the Pontic steppes could certainly be considered geographically part of Europe, in the medieval period Europe was envisioned as being Western Christendom and part of the Byzantine Empire. The Mongol invasion in 1241, though expected, was still traumatic and influenced European views of the Mongols for centuries.

In 1241 the Mongols, commanded by Prince Batu and the general Subedei, invaded Central Europe. Although the invasion of Central Europe was part of the directives given in the *quriltai* of 1234, it is somewhat surprising that the Mongols invaded Central Europe so soon after conquering such a vast amount of territory from the Rus' and the Kipchaks. This invasion, coupled with the conquest of Rus', solidified the perception that the Mongols were essentially a relentless force of nature. The Hungarians, however, anticipated the invasion and made a defensive alliance with Bulgaria in 1240. Previously the two countries were on the verge of war, but the greater threat looming to the east eased negotiations.

The invasion was carried out on a broad front. Two Mongol *tumed* invaded Poland, wreaking havoc throughout the country and departing before any organized defense could be arranged. Despite the large-scale destruction, this was not the main attack. Although the Mongols in Poland, led by Baidar, son of Chagatai and Orda, Batu's brother, numbered perhaps 20,000, their small numbers were compensated by sudden strikes that left the Polish convinced that a much larger force had invaded. After sacking Cracow and several other cities, the Mongols received word that Henry of Silesia (1238–1241) was forming an army of the northern princes near Liegnitz and that King Vaclav I (1230–1253) of Bohemia was also on the march to join it. The Mongols then rode to Liegnitz and defeated it in April 1241 before Vaclav could join it. Vaclav would be the next to face Baidar and Orda, but his army was too strong to be easily defeated. The Mongols, already with heavy casualties, merely had to keep him from Hungary. After a wild-goose chase that drew the Bohemian king farther from Hungary, the Mongols broke into smaller units and pillaged along the way as they rode to rendezvous with Batu.

The attack on Poland was but one of two coordinated campaigns being carried out by the Mongols. The main blow in Europe struck Hungary as Batu (fl. 1230–1255) and

the veteran general Subedei relentlessly pursued the fleeing Kipchak tribes who sought safety with King Bela IV (1235–1270) of Hungary. At the same time that Baidar and Orda were securing the northern flank, Batu and Subedei invaded Hungary. Meanwhile Qadan, son of Ogodei, and Buri, son of Chagatai, invaded Wallachia. Bochuk, son of Tolui, took another route through Wallachia. In total the Mongols invaded Central Europe through four routes. The Hungarians met Batu and Subedei in combat at Mohi, also in April 1241, where the Hungarians met defeat in a rout. Despite a truly valiant effort, the Hungarians lost some 60,000 men on the Mohi heath.

Following their victory at Mohi, the Mongols marched toward Buda and Pest. So rapidly did they advance that they arrived at Pest almost before the Hungarians had completed their defenses. The city fell after a few days' siege, and the Mongols massacred the population and burned the city. The Mongols then occupied the Alföld Plain.

Qadan, who had invaded Hungary through Wallachia, proceeded against Serbia and eventually led the pursuit of Bela. After Bela's flight to Spalato (modern-day Split), Qadan turned back and returned toward Russia again through Wallachia. Although Qadan did have siege weapons with him, he did not lay siege to Spalato. Bela finally escaped the Mongols' grasp by fleeing to Trau, where a channel of water separated the city from the mainland, even though Qadan pursued him there. Eventually Qadan's forces withdrew. During the course of their return the Mongols also secured the submission of Asan, the ruler of Bulgaria.

With the majority of Hungary now in the hands of the Mongols and with Poland devastated, the Holy Roman Empire appeared to be the next target. A cry for a crusade went up throughout Europe. Troops were gathered, but they were prepared to defend German territory, not to restore Hungary to Catholic hands. Some skirmishes were



After conquering what is now Russia, Batu invaded Hungary while another army invaded Poland. This illustration titled “Batu Khan Raids Western Europe in 1241” comes from a series of illustrated chronicles written during the reign of Ivan the Terrible, Russian School, 16th century. (Russian Academy of Sciences Library Depository St Petersburg/Sputnik/Bridgeman Images)

fought. Ultimately little resulted from the calls for a crusade. A ray of hope did appear as the Mongols withdrew from Hungary as rumors of the Mongol defeats appeared in the Holy Roman Empire.

The reality of the situation was that Ogodei (1221–1241) had died, and Batu was needed back in Mongolia to choose a successor. The Mongols did not retreat from Hungary in disorganization. Instead, their retreat may have appeared as an invasion to the Europeans. Contingents were sent into Austria and perhaps even into regions of Germany. This kept the Europeans from being able to attack the main body of the Mongols as they pulled back into Russia. An army of crusaders could not possibly follow the Mongols while there were several Mongol raiding parties burning and pillaging villages in the empire. The Mongols left Hungary in a devastated wreck, and the army gathered in Germany could do nothing but try to disperse the raiders. According to Thomas of Spalato, during their withdrawal the Mongol forces operating in the Balkans united with Batu's forces in Bulgaria. To hasten their evacuation of the region, they slew their captives.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Guyuk's Election; *Individuals:* Batu; Ogodei Khan; *Key Events:* Crusades against the Mongols; *Military:* Liegnitz, Battle of; Mohi, Battle of; Subedei; *Key Places:* Kipchak Steppes; *Primary Documents:* Document 20

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Hethum, King of Cilicia (r. 1226–1269), Submission of

As the Mongols expanded into the Middle East, they proved to be a new and powerful player in the region. The victory at the Battle of Kose Dagh brought them into the vicinity of the Armenian Kingdom of Cilicia. Historically a pawn of the Byzantine Empire and the Principality of Antioch as well as a victim of relentless Seljuk raids, Cilicia's ruler, King Hethum sought an ally.

Hethum was keenly interested in the coming conflict. When the Seljuk sultan Kaykhusraw requested troops, Hethum delayed and ultimately failed to send them. Shortly thereafter Hethum submitted to Baiju, the *tammachi* in Azerbaijan. Hethum recognized the wisdom of voluntary submission to the Mongols before they overran Cilicia. Not only did he save his kingdom from the Mongols, but Cilicia now came

under their protection. Hethum could now request Mongol aid should the Seljuks or anyone else attacked Cilicia. Additionally, the Mongols restored some of the territories and fortresses that the Seljuks captured from him. In 1247, King Hethum sent his brother Smbat to Karakorum to submit to Guyuk as a formal show of obeisance. Smbat returned with a formal decree guaranteeing the integrity of Hethum's kingdom.

When Mongke Khan came to the throne, Hethum personally went to Karakorum. In 1253, Hethum received a new *jarliq*, or decree. Most of the *jarliq* came from a treaty that Hethum had written himself consisting of seven articles. Of them, only one was unreasonable to the Mongols—that Mongke should be baptized as a Christian. Although Mongke did not agree to that article, Hethum found many other Mongol dignitaries who were either Nestorian Christians or at least well disposed toward the religion.

The second article reaffirmed Hethum's relationship with the Mongols. The third exempted clergy from taxation, which was normal practice for the Mongols. In the fourth article, Hethum convinced the Mongols to give Jerusalem to the Christians if they conquered it. The fifth article asked for the removal of the caliph, which aligned with Mongol interests. The sixth article formally gave Hethum the right to seek Mongol military assistance when needed. Finally, land taken from Cilicia by Muslim powers would be returned to Cilicia. The treaty itself meant little to the Mongols, as most of the terms had been in effect since 1244. For Hethum, however, the treaty increased his prestige greatly. It allowed him to claim that he convinced the Mongols to attack the Abbasid Caliphate as well as to open the opportunity to reclaim Jerusalem for Christendom.

Hethum returned to Cilicia safely, often traveling in disguise. Flush with success, he then tried to convince the Latin crusader states in the Middle East to also submit to the Mongols. He argued that his success would allow them to reap benefits and restore the Kingdom of Jerusalem to its former glory. The specter of the Mongol invasion of Europe, however, weighed on the minds of most. The terror of the Mongols, both real and imagined, was simply something that they could not reconcile themselves with, as they justifiably did not trust the Mongols. While the Kingdom of Jerusalem (now a truncated coastal state) declined, Bohemund VI (1251–1269), the son-in-law of Hethum and ruler of the Principality of Antioch and the County of Tripoli, submitted. As a reward, he also saw his lands increase.

When Hulegu attacked the Abbasid Caliphate, Hethum joined the Mongols during the invasion of Syria with an army of 12,000 horsemen and 4,000 infantry. His forces took part in the capture of Aleppo, and King Hethum entered Damascus with the Mongol general Kitbuqa after Damascus peacefully submitted.

Hethum's submission to the Mongols did have some consequences. While the Mongols expanded, Cilicia benefited greatly. With the dissolution of the Mongol Empire, Hethum's pro-Mongol activity came back and haunted him. While the Mamluk Sultanate was not willing to invade the Il-Khanate and risk an engagement directly against the Mongols, they were perfectly willing to attack Cilicia, the Principality of Antioch, and the County of Tripoli.

After Hulegu died in 1265, Sultan Baybars found his opportunity. In 1266, the Mamluks invaded Cilicia and sacked the cities of Aya, Adana, Tarsus, and Sis. Hethum

has not present. Having anticipated the attack, he had gone to Tabriz to seek help from the new il-khan, Abaqa. Unfortunately, Hethum was unable to return in time to assist in defending Cilicia. His sons Leon and Thoros were left in charge. They were no match for Baybars. Thoros died, and Leon was captured. Although Abaqa was unable to aid Hethum militarily at the time, he did provide Hethum with a high-ranking Mamluk prisoner to use as a bargaining chip to ransom his son. Leon was returned but in exchange for the Mamluk received four fortresses, including the citadel of Aleppo, which the Mongols held at the time.

Hethum, despondent over the loss of Thoros and the destruction of his kingdom, abdicated the throne in favor of Leon (r. 1269–1289) and retired to a monastery. Hethum died in 1269. His loss was grievous for the Mongols. Not only was he a valuable ally and vassal in war, but his diplomatic talents truly made him an asset to the Mongols. He was the key for making an alliance with the crusaders. His standing as a Christian king gave him a status in Christendom, and his ties to the Mongols made him a valued mediator for both sides.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Mongol Empire, Dissolution of; *Organization and Administration:* Tammachi; *Individuals:* Baybars I; Hulegu; Mongke Khan; *Military:* Baghdad, Siege of; *Tamma;* *Key Places:* Abbasid Caliphate; Mamluk Sultanate

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Japan, Invasion of (1274, 1280)

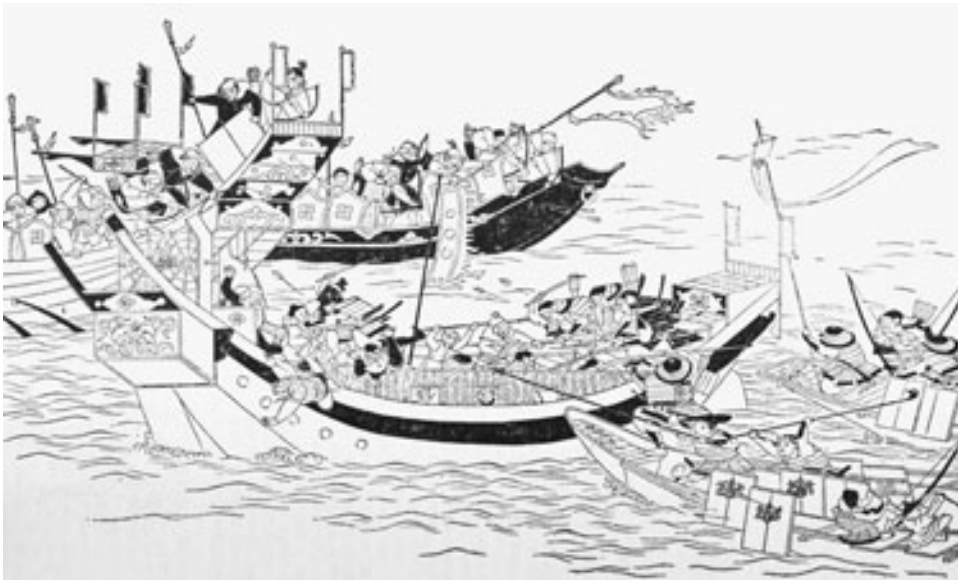
The death of Mongke Khan led to a civil war among the Mongols. Ultimately Khubilai Khan emerged victorious over his brother, Ariq Boke. With this victory, Khubilai continued his conquest of Song Empire. At the same time, he sought to isolate the Song Empire from its allies and resources. This included Japan, where the Song conducted a considerable amount of trade that funded their resistance to Mongol conquest.

In 1268 and 1271, Khubilai Khan sent emissaries to Japan to establish contact as well as demand its submission, as the Mongols firmly believed that Tenggeri, or heaven, had decreed that the heirs of Chinggis Khan were meant to rule the world. On both occasions, the Japanese court refused to meet with the Mongol ambassadors. In 1272, another ambassador arrived with an ultimatum: submit or be destroyed. Again, he was denied an audience with the Japanese court. He returned and reported his failure to a

furious Khubilai, now determined to subdue Japan. At this point, the Mongols had recently captured Xiangyang, thus allowing Khubilai to divert some of his army against the Japanese.

In November 1274, a large fleet of 700 to 800 ships, carrying 30,000 soldiers and sailors, sailed from Korea toward Japan. Landing on the islands of Tsushima and Iki, they quickly overcame all resistance. The Mongols then sailed to Hakata Bay on the island of Kyushu and anchored. As news of the Mongol conquest of Tsushima and Iki preceded them, the Mongols found a Japanese army at Hakata. Although the Japanese attacked the Mongol landing parties, they soon found themselves on the defensive. As the Japanese samurai attempted to gain individual glory, the Mongol army fought in disciplined units. Consisting of Mongols, Han Chinese, and Koreans, the Mongols repulsed the samurai and established a beachhead.

At the end of the day on November 19, the Japanese retreated under the cover of night. Taken aback by the Mongols' style of warfare, which allowed individually less talented warriors to overcome the martial prowess of the samurai, the Japanese licked their wounds and waited for morning. The morning's battle never came, though, as a typhoon hit the island. The Mongol navy attempted to reach open water before the winds destroyed its ships, but the storm moved too fast. Hundreds of ships were destroyed, and approximately 13,000 troops died from the storm, as did those trapped on the shore. The surviving ships had little choice but to return and report the disaster to Khubilai Khan.



The Mongols failed to conquer Japan, but it was not due to lack of trying. This 20th-century reproduction of a Japanese woodblock depicts the destruction of the Mongol Armada of 1281, the second Mongol invasion of Japan. It originally appeared as part of a scroll commissioned after the Japanese victory. (Arthur Mee, ed. *Harmsworth History of the World*, 1907)

Only after the destruction of the Song in 1279 could Khubilai give Japan renewed attention. Again he sent an envoy to demand their submission, but the Japanese executed him. In 1280, Khubilai Khan ordered his generals to prepare for another assault. Orders were also sent to the Korea to construct a fleet.

After the first invasion, the Japanese prepared for a Mongol return and constructed a long wall along Hakata Bay. Although they could not be sure the Mongols would attack there again, it was the most logical landing area for an attack from Korea. Even if the Mongols avoided Hakata Bay because of the wall, it diverted them to more difficult landing areas. Furthermore, the samurai learned from their first encounter and practiced unit tactics rather than focusing on individual fights.

Hong Tagu, a Korean admiral, was placed in charge of the 900-vessel fleet—the largest naval operation until D-day in 1944. Two generals commanded the army of over 100,000. The first was a former Song general, Fan Wanhu, and the other was Shintu, a huge Mongol who was the overall commander. The Korean fleet was to be joined by a fleet coming from China as they made a two-pronged attack on Iki, which would then serve as a launching point for the invasion of Kyushu.

Hong Tagu waited for the other fleet before he lost patience and attacked Iki in June 1281. The army of 40,000 that landed wreaked havoc and then waited for two weeks for the rest of the army to arrive. Even so, the other fleet did not appear. Admiral Hong Tagu directed his ships toward Kyushu. Seeing the defenses at Hakata Bay, he sailed to the north to Manakata. The other fleet finally arrived and made its landing to the south of Hakata. The attack was then coordinated to meet in the middle, behind the Hakata Bay wall.

Although the samurai resisted fiercely and fought as a unit, they could not overcome the Mongols. At the same time, the Mongol forces, with the bulk being former Song conscripts, could not make sufficient headway against the Japanese. With the stalemate, the Japanese made daring attacks on the Mongol fleet of small boats. The inconclusive fighting lasted for two months before another disaster struck the Mongols. In mid-August another typhoon struck, destroying a large number of ships and drowning thousands of soldiers. The better-made Korean ships survived but limped off back to Korea. The soldiers stranded on Kyushu were killed or taken prisoner by the Japanese.

When Khubilai learned of the defeat, he ordered another invasion. It never manifested, however, as his advisers persuaded him that the cost of the invasion did not merit the conquest—Korea itself was exhausted financially and materially from building the last fleet. Further demands could risk rebellion. For the Japanese, however, the victories over the Mongols were not due to luck or military strategy but rather to divine intervention. The typhoons that wrecked the Mongol fleets were due to the kamikaze, or divine winds, and were a sign of heaven's favor for Japan. Yet judging from their resistance during the second Mongol invasion, it was unlikely that the Mongols would have succeeded in a quick conquest.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Military:* Armor; Weapons; *Key Places:* Song Empire; Xiangyang, Siege of; *Primary Documents:* Document 37

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Jin Empire, Fall of the (1234)

The Jin Empire was no easy target for the Mongols. It was large and stretched across many ecological zones with different ways of life. In the far north, the original homeland of the Jurchen, rulers of the Jin Empire, hunting and gathering were the norm, and there was a low population density. Farther south an extensive agriculture began of those crops that could be grown under cold conditions, slowly giving way to a more traditional Chinese-style agriculture. To the west was the steppe, what is now Inner Mongolia. This area had a strong pastoral presence, principally Khitan tribesmen, speaking a language closely related to Mongolian. They were the former rulers of the Liao dynasty, which had preceded the Jin but was conquered by the invaders in 1125. The former tribal areas of Liao remained sensitive politically and suffered from chronic uprisings. There was some dry farming going on there, but only in the bend of the Yellow River where the sedentary Onggud, a Turkic people, lived a more sophisticated agriculture found, including viniculture. Farther south even rice could be grown, along the Yangtze, in addition to the millet and wheat traditional in the area for thousands of years.

The Mongols first raided the tribal areas of Jin, and these were conquered gradually and piecemeal, starting in 1207, thanks to a great uprising of Khitan tribesmen against the Jurchen. The culturally mixed areas came next, including Zhongdu, the “Middle Capital,” one of many Jin capitals but particularly important because it later became the administrative center of Mongol northern China. Advancing Mongol conquests were not just Mongol raids but included many Chinese and other warlords who had chosen to ally themselves with the conquerors. In the far north, Jurchen tribesmen went over to the conquerors because the rulers of the empire were perceived by many of their own people as too Sinicized. As Chinggis Khan turned his armies to the far west, the Muslim world, after 1218, he could safely rely on his tribal garrison, called *tamma*, and local allies to hold his new empire in northern China and continue expansion.

Conquest of the surviving rump of the Jin Empire, located in the densely populated agricultural south, proved much more difficult and took another 16 years. There the Jin had coalesced after 1215 around the large Chinese city of Kaifeng, an old Song dynasty capital. Kaifeng became the Nanjing, “Southern Capital,” of the Jurchen. From there they built up their resources and even reconquered some areas, particularly after the death of Muqali, head of the tribal *tamma*, in 1223.

Finally, a special campaign against the remnant Jin Empire was ordered by Ogodei Khan. The advance began in 1231, led by veteran general Subedei. By this time Mongol armies were no longer just Mongolian but also included substantial numbers of Chinese soldiers. Most of these were led by local Chinese warlords.

To outflank Jin defenders, Subedei launched his attack from the west, through Southern Song domains. Opposing him was the Jin commander Wanyan Heda, covering his capital. Subedei let himself be surrounded on Mount Sanfeng but took advantage of a difficult position by using weather magic, *jada*, as *The Secret History of the Mongols* would have us believe, to freeze his Jin opponents with a stinging blizzard. Overcome by the elements, Heda had no choice but to flee. He was captured shortly thereafter. The way to Nanjing was open, but at this point Ogodei was ill. His shaman told him by all the spirits of the many dead killed in the campaign, made a truce and returned to the steppe. He left Subedei behind.

Subedei, unwilling to accept the truce, nurtured those forces still in his command, including probably for the first time in a Mongol campaign a majority of Chinese soldiers. He even build up a siege train to compensate for previous Mongol weakness against fortified cities.

To further advantage himself, Subedei continued to blockade the Jin capital, preventing food and other supplies from reaching the doomed city. By then the Southern Song, anxious for their share of the spoils, had also attacked the Jin. Nanjing was now completely isolated. Reduced to extremities, the Jin emperor fled to the small fortress of Caizhou, which fell to the Mongols in February 1234. His abandoned capital surrendered the same month. Left with no other options, the last Jin emperor killed himself, ending the Jin dynasty. The war against the Jin was over, but almost immediately hostilities broke out between the Song and the Mongols, former allies, with a preemptive attack by Subedei on Song Luoyang. Thus began a war that went on for 45 years.

In the process of conquering the Jin, an accomplishment for the Mongols whose power was substantial but still limited by its steppe base, the Mongols had to not just change their mode of operation but themselves had to adapt to entirely new conditions. In many ways they did not just cross a frontier into the Chinese world but were themselves crossed by that same frontier as sedentary political structures became more important than ever before. In Zhongdu they even had a real capital for their Chinese domains with a real bureaucracy.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Muqali; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; Onggud; *Military:* Caizhou, Siege of; Kaifeng, Siege of; Subedei; *Tanma;* *Objects and Artifacts:* *The Secret History of the Mongols;* *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Zhongdu

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John of Plano Carpini, Journey of (1180–1252)

John of Plano Carpini is best known for his travel account *Ystoria Mongalorum* (*History of the Mongols*). Plano Carpini, a Franciscan friar, was dispatched with Benedict the Pole by Pope Innocent IV (r. 1243–1254) to travel into the Mongol Empire to ascertain their intents toward Europe. John’s travels (1245–1247) came in the wake of the Mongol invasion of Europe, which left Poland and Hungary devastated and the rest of Europe in panic. Although crusades were called against the Mongols, none invaded the Mongol Empire.

John was an interesting choice for the mission, as he was 65 years old and overweight. Born in Perugia in central Italy, he became a disciple of Francis of Assisi. John became a Franciscan in 1220 and quickly became a leading teacher, spending most of his career in Germany, and he was well known to many of the crowned heads of Europe. He was in Cologne during the Mongol invasion, perilously close to their westernmost advances. His knowledge of court protocol might have played a role in his selection. At the same time, being a Franciscan friar (even though high ranking), he was more adept at mingling with the common people, something at which a bishop or noble would have been ill at ease. This was to be an important aspect of his mission. Although he spoke several languages, he had no knowledge of the languages spoken in the Mongol Empire. Furthermore, John was under no illusion as to how dangerous his mission was. He and Benedict were certain that they would be killed or imprisoned by the Mongols. Considering the Mongols’ view of envoys (*elchi* in Mongolian), John’s fears may have been overexaggerated, but there is no reason why he would have known this, particularly in the years after the Mongol invasion in which rumors abounded of the Mongols, including stories of cannibalism. Nonetheless, as he carried letters given to him by the pope, John departed Lyons, France, on April 16, 1245.



We are fortunate that John's mission was more than simply delivering letters. He was also sent to spy on the Mongols and gather intelligence. Due to this, he left a detailed account of his travels. John of Plano Carpini's report would be one of the first to paint a more honest, but still biased, report of the Mongols. The report is a mixture of anthropology, personal journey, and espionage. He provides an account of his journey and his dealings with the Mongols, which were by and large without incident. Commanders of various posts (*yam* stations) forwarded John and Benedict with an escort first to Sartaq, the son of Batu, then to Batu and then onward to Karakorum. When John began his journey, he knew that he would enter the steppes but had no idea that his journey would take him 3,000 miles and into Mongolia, a destination he did not even know existed. The pace was not quite to John's liking—it was fast, and he was unused to riding at such a rate through all manner of terrain and weather. Nor did he find the food satisfactory. Interwoven throughout his narrative are his lamentations regarding food.

The rapid pace did permit John to arrive at the camp of Guyuk on July 22, 1246—in time for his coronation. Thus John of Plano Carpini witnessed the coronation of the most powerful ruler in the world at that time. His report details not only the event but also those who attended. The list includes the various Mongol princes and generals as well as vassals of the Mongols such as princes from the Rus' and Georgia.

Despite his fears, there was little chance that John and his companions were to be imprisoned. The Mongols were quite interested in meeting this representative of the pope—a figure the Mongols did not quite understand. They viewed him as priest-king who ruled all of Europe, but Guyuk still expected him to come to Karakorum and submit. Furthermore, John of Plano Carpini learned that Guyuk intended to invade Europe again. To this end, John of Plano Carpini spent considerable thought regarding the

When John of Plano Carpini returned to Europe, he carried this letter from Guyuk Khan to Pope Innocent IV, dated November 11, 1246. The essential message from Guyuk was for the Pope to come to Karakorum and submit, as heaven had decreed, that all the world was to be ruled by Chinggis Khan and his heirs. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

Mongol war machine. Although his travel account is filled with details regarding the customs of the Mongols, some understanding of the rise of the empire (although also filled with myth), and their dress and eating habits, most of it is written as an observer. In regard to military affairs, however, it is clear that John turned his considerable intellect to discerning not only how the Mongols might attack but also how Europe should respond. Although it might seem incongruous that a Franciscan might be so involved in military matters, one should not dismiss the Mongol threat. Again, at first glance John of Plano Carpini might have seemed an odd choice to send to Mongolia (although the intent was originally Sarai), but there might have been something in John's background that remains a secret that made him an obvious choice to Pope Innocent IV as well.

Although Carpini's account is biased, this is not surprising. He was a man of his culture. To him, non-Christians (particularly nomads) were ignorant and barbaric, heretics (such as Nestorians) were misguided. Yet once the bias is removed, his report is quite accurate in his observations and can be verified in a number of other accounts, including non-Western ones. His efforts were undoubtedly appreciated by Pope Innocent IV. While it is not certain that it is related, his service surely influenced his appointment as archbishop of Antivari, located in modern-day Croatia.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Sarai; *Organization and Administration:* Yam; *Individuals:* Guyuk; *Groups and Organizations:* Franciscans; *Key Events:* Crusades against the Mongols; Europe, Invasion of; *Primary Documents:* Document 12; Document 13

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Islam. See Mongol Conversion to Islam

Kulikovo Pole, Battle of (1380)

In Russian nationalist history, the Battle of Kulikovo Pole (Kulikovo Field) marks the independence of Moscow from the Mongols. In reality, that would not occur until 100 years later. Nonetheless, the battle remains significant because the Muscovites defeated a Mongol army, even if this did not end Chinggisid rule.

The Mongols were led by Mamai, a non-Chinggisid kingmaker who dominated the Golden Horde from 1361 to 1380. His opponent at Kulikovo was Dmitri Ivanovich, the

grand duke of Muscovy. Due to the civil wars that wracked the Golden Horde, their prestige and ability to enforce their rule over the Rus' principalities had slipped, allowing some to become almost autonomous. Not only did they ignore Mongol commands, but they also failed to send tribute to Sarai. Indeed, Dmitri was perhaps the worst offender of this new freedom. Not only had he attacked a Mongol punitive force, but he also raided the environs of Kazan, a Mongol city near Bulgar, in 1376. Now secure in power, Mamai sought to reassert Mongol prerogatives over the Rus'.

The Battle of Kulikovo Pole was the culmination of a number of events between Mamai and Grand Duke Dmitri. The first encounter took place on August 11, 1378, at the Vozha River when Dmitri defeated an army sent by Mamai. Mamai, in retaliation, attacked the environs of Riazan', destroying a number of towns and carrying off many captives. A third battle took place on September 8, 1380, at the confluence the Dona and Nepryadva Rivers. This was the Kulikovo Pole.

Knowing that Mamai would attack them, Dmitri led his army into the steppe, something that had not been attempted since the disaster at the Kalka River. He gathered intelligence as he rode, learning that the army of Riazan' marched with Mamai and perhaps even Lithuanians. While the sources indicate that Riazan' joined Mamai on their own volition, they may have had little choice after the raids in 1379; the sources also indicate that Mamai passed through Riazan' en route to Moscow. Dmitri then made a bold move and crossed the Oka River into Riazan's territory. This move cut off communications between Mamai and Lithuania. While the main body of Lithuanians decided to wait and see who won, another body joined Grand Duke Dmitri. Dmitri did not sit and wait for Mamai but kept moving, carefully choosing the battleground while keeping in mind the danger of a sedentary army fighting the Mongols in the steppes. The Don and Nepryadva Rivers protected two flanks, and the battle took place on the edge of where the steppes met the forests of northern Russia.

Dmitri stationed his cousin Prince Vladimir Andreevich of Polotsk upstream of the Don River in a forest. The rest of the army he led to the mouth of the Nepryadva River, and thus the forest was behind him. The position of the rivers and forests prevented the Mongols from outflanking him. The Mongols approached the Muscovites down a slope. The battle raged back and forth, with neither side gaining the upper hand. Finally, the Muscovite wings were able to advance, but then a large Mongol force appeared from the hills. As this new force clashed with the tired Muscovite force, the reserves under Prince Vladimir Andreevich attacked from the forest and swept the field.

Despite fierce fighting, Mamai was forced to retreat. With two defeats at the hands of Dmitri, his credibility was destroyed. When he sought to reestablish his authority against recalcitrant Genoese in Crimea, he also failed. His authority had diminished to such a point that he had to cede much of Crimea to the Genoese. It appeared as if not only was Muscovy free from the Mongols, but the Golden Horde was on the verge of collapse because of Mamai's defeat at Kulikovo Pole.

Mamai's situation worsened with the appearance of Toqtamys (d. 1406), the protégé of Timur-i Leng and khan of the White Horde (the eastern portion of the Jochid territory). As an actual Chinggisid, Toqtamys had legitimacy on his side, which was only increased through his ability as a leader and military commander. He pursued

LIBERATION OF MUSCOVY

While the Battle of Kulikovo Pole has been claimed as the moment Moscow liberated itself from the Mongols, history clearly shows otherwise. Actual liberation occurred in 1480 at the Battle of the Ugra River. By this time, the Golden Horde no longer existed. Internal divisions and civil wars split the Golden Horde into the Crimean Khanate (Black Sea region), the Khanate of Kazan (Volga River), the Khanate of Astrakhan (Caspian Sea region), the Sibir Khanate (east of the Ural Mountains), and the Nogay Horde, which roamed the Pontic and Caspian steppes. Finally there was the Great Horde, which claimed supremacy over the others but in name only.

The prince of Muscovy, Ivan III (r. 1462–1505), used the dissension among these Mongol powers to his advantage, forming an alliance with the Crimean Khanate. He was also friendly with the Sibir Khanate and the Nogay Horde. To counter this, Ahmad Khan, the ruler of the Great Horde, allied with Lithuania. When Ahmad's envoys were dismissed by Ivan III in his city of Moscow, war began. Ahmad's army rode to the Ugra River, the border between Lithuania and Muscovy. The Lithuanian army was to rendezvous with him, but it never arrived. Crimean troops distracted the Lithuanians by raiding their borders, forcing them to respond. Meanwhile, Moscow's army awaited Ahmad on the other bank of the river.

While often labeled as a battle, the Battle of the Ugra River in 1480 was really more of a standoff. Some arrows were shot by each side and insults were hurled with equal ferocity, but neither side was willing to commit to battle—too much was at stake. In the end both sides withdrew without battle, but it was a victory for Ivan. The Great Horde could not risk military engagement with Muscovy, as they were too evenly matched, so it was unable to assert its authority. As a result, Muscovy became independent. Oddly enough, it would eventually conquer all of the Golden Horde and establish the Russian Empire.

Mamai to the region of the Sea of Azov and defeated him along the Kalka River in 1380. Toqtamysh then reunited the Golden Horde and the White Horde, making him the undisputed master of the Jochid Ulus, or territories.

With his victory at Kulikovo Pole, Dmitri became known as Dmitri Donskoi (as the battle was along the Don River), and his power was never greater. Muscovy's newfound independence, however, was short-lived. Now the ruler of the Golden Horde, Toqtamysh asserted his claim over Muscovy and the rest of the Rus' territories. Dmitri and many other Rus' princes following his lead refused to pay homage to Toqtamysh. In retaliation, Toqtamysh invaded in 1381. Suzdal, Vladimir, and other cities were sacked. In August 1382, Moscow also felt the wrath of Toqtamysh. Dmitri had attempted to dissuade the attack, offering tribute and claiming that he had only refused it to Mamai because he was not a Chinggisid. Toqtamysh saw through Dmitri's falsehood and burned Moscow while Dmitri fled the city. Lithuania also felt the wrath of Toqtamysh as it attempted to intervene. A resurgent Golden Horde threatened their own expansion and authority over Rus' towns that they had gained during periods of Golden Horde instability. The Mongol prince demolished Lithuanian forces in the Battle of

Poltava in 1382. When Toqtamysh had finished, it was clear that the Tatar Yoke was not removed and indeed would last another 100 years.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Sarai; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Individuals:* Timur-i Leng; *Military:* Kalka River, Battle of the; *Key Places:* Lithuania

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Mongol Conversion to Islam

The conversion of the Mongols from their traditional beliefs to Islam is one of the topics that has been of great attraction to scholars studying the history of the Mongol Empire. Although there are different examples of individuals converting to Islam in different parts of the empire, it is generally agreed that the conversion of a khan was more the consequence of a process of Islamization occurring among his followers rather than the origin of mass conversion. In other words, it appears that the conversion of the Mongols was more of a bottom-up process rather than the contrary. One of the reasons suggested for this phenomenon is the progressive incorporation of Turkic people with different degrees of Islamization into the Mongol army as the empire grew in size and extension. In addition, as a result of the interest of the Mongol court in crafting good relationships with religious authorities that was generated once the Mongols conquered and settled in Islamic lands, Muslim scholars, officials, and sheikhs progressively came into ever closer contact with the Mongols, exposing them to Islamic customs and beliefs.

The presence of Islamized Turkic populations such as the Kipchaks in the territories of the Golden Horde has been seen as one of the reasons why Islam might have taken root among some of the Mongol rulers of this *ulus* earlier than others. The first Mongol ruler of the Golden Horde to officially proclaim himself Muslim was Berke Khan (r. 1257–1266), but there has been debate among scholars about the motives for and the degree of his conversion. Although political motives for his affiliation to Islam cannot be proven, it was an important asset in the promotion of his alliance with the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt in the growing rivalry with the Mongols of Iran. Islam returned to the throne of the Golden Horde with the ascension of Tode Mongke (r. 1280–1287), who had previously converted to Islam in 1283. Finally, it was in the early 14th century,

when Uzbek Khan (r. 1312–1341) seized control of the realm, that the Golden Horde began its deeper process of Islamization.

The first Muslim Mongol ruler of the Chagatai Khanate ruled for a short period of time. Mubarak Shah, the son of Orghina Khatun and Qara Hulegu, grandson of Chagatai, assumed control of Central Asia after the death of his mother, ruling only during the year 1266 until he was deposed by Baraq (r. 1266–1271). Little is known about Mubarak's life and the circumstances of his conversion to Islam, yet it appears that his mother's proximity to Muslim notables in Central Asia while she was regent of the *ulus* might have influenced the religious milieu of the young prince. Despite this early Muslim affiliation of a ruler in Central Asia, the Chagatai Khanate would not have a constant succession of Muslim rulers until the time of Tarmashirin's reign in the 14th century.

Despite not being an area where the Muslim population was a majority, the Mongol domains in China saw sporadic cases of conversion to Islam among members of the royal family. The most significant of them is the case of Prince Ananda, a grandson of Khubilai, to whom Rashid al-Din pays especial attention. The Persian historian attributes to his Muslim nurse the commitment of Ananda to Islam, but he is also an emblematic figure who reflects the relevance that Muslim migrants from Iran and Central Asia acquired in China under Mongol rule. In fact, the presence of Sufi sheikhs in the Yuan court is attested in the sources on different occasions, and recent research has found that the presence of Muslim communities in China was especially important in the Yuan territories.

A more general picture of the adoption of Islam in the Il-Khanate can be suggested. Initially the il-khans were reluctant to adopt Islam, and it appears that under Hulegu (r. 1260–1265) and Abaqa (1265–1282) Christianity had a short renaissance in the Middle East. Personal affinity and the influence of some of their Christian wives might be among the reasons for this favoritism. However, political convenience might have also played a part, as the enmity with the Muslim Golden Horde and the Mamluk Sultanate pushed the Il-Khanate closer to seeking an alliance with European powers and Byzantium. Despite this, the majority Muslim population in the army, the proselytising activity of Sufi sheikhs in the Mongol *ordos*, and the emergence of a new Mongol generation born and raised in Islamic lands meant that after almost two decades of its establishment, the Il-Khanate had its first Muslim ruler.

The short rule of Ahmad Teguder (r. 1282–1284) marks the beginning of a new tendency toward Islam among the Mongol elites of the Il-Khanate. The influence of Sufi sheikhs and the politics of the period seem to be pivotal in this shift toward Islam, but inner opposition among some of the more traditional Mongol elites made this initial adoption of Islam short-lived. The famous conversion of Ghazan Khan (r. 1295–1304) in Iran occurred in 1295. Although this might have been a response to political motivations, as his conversion granted him the support of the majoritarian Muslim Army against his rival Baidu, it appears that by the end of the 13th century, the Mongol elites of the Il-Khanate were more receptive to a Muslim khan. From Ghazan's time onward, the il-khans continued to be Muslims until the end of the Il-Khanate in 1335. Despite his Christian upbringing and his hesitation between Sunnism and Shiism, Oljeitu



Persian illuminated manuscript showing Ghazan Khan's (r. 1295–1304) conversion to Islam in 1295. Ghazan was not the first Mongol to convert to Islam, but after his conversion it became more common for Mongols to support Muslim rulers. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

took root among Mongol rulers. Overall, the picture is a long process of Islamization that progressively acculturated the Mongols to the new land and finally converted the rulers to Islam.

Bruno De Nicola

See also: *Government and Politics:* Uzbek Khan; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; *Ordo;* *Individuals:* Ghazan; Oljeitu; Orghina Khatun; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; *Key Events:* Tarmashirin, Overthrow of; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 38; Document 134

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(r. 1304–1317) favored Islam during his reign, and his successor Abu Said (r. 1317–1335) ruled as a Muslim throughout his reign.

The conversion of the Mongols occurred across the empire and in all four *uluses* that emerged from the division of the empire after the death of Mongke Khan in 1259. However, in those areas where the majority of the subject population was Muslim, it is possible to observe similarities in the process of Islamization undergone by the Mongols. In both the Golden Horde and the Il-Khanate, the first generation of Mongol rulers remained pagan and even occasionally favored Christianity. Around 20 years after their arrival to the new lands, the first Mongol rulers who embraced Islam began to appear (i.e., Berke and Teguder), but it seems that at this point there was still some traditional opposition to a definitive commitment to Islam. It is in the final decades of the 13th century and the beginning of the 14th century that Islam finally

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Otrar Massacre (1218)

The Otrar Massacre occurred in 1218 and contributed to the Mongol conquest of Mawarannahr and the destruction of the Khwarazmian Empire. The devastation of the Khwarazmian state by Chinggis Khan served as punishment for prior executions and insults inflicted on Mongol-sponsored merchants and emissaries and as a cautionary tale of belligerence toward and resistance to the Mongols.

The city of Otrar was situated in a fertile agricultural region along the Syr Darya River and served as an important oasis and trading post along the Silk Road. This territory fell under the authority of the Khwarazmian shah. The Khwarazmians were initially subordinates of the Seljuks and then the empire of Kara Khitai. Due to the presence of many significant Silk Road trade outposts, the control of the region of Mawarannahr was economically lucrative and strategically important for the Khwarazmian dynasty.

The Khwarazmshah, Ala' al-Din Muhammad II (d. 1220), was already placed in a precarious political relationship concerning the Mongols. First, Chinggis Khan (d. 1227) referred to the Khwarazmshah by the term "son," which illustrated that the Mongols viewed the Khwarazmian ruler as an inferior. Second, a minor military encounter between these two groups occurred when the Mongols pursued Merkit tribesmen into Khwarazmian territory. Against this backdrop, the Mongols attempted to initiate trade relations with the Khwarazmians in 1218, when they sent a merchant caravan to the city of Otrar, southwest of recently conquered Mongol territory. Historically, pastoral nomads such as the Mongols regularly interacted with sedentary peoples to obtain desirable trade goods. When trade relations were favorable, military violence and raiding were minimal. With the rise to power of Chinggis Khan such trends were changing, as policies turned from trading or raiding to outright conquest and eventual direct rule over sedentary peoples. With this in mind, Mongol relations with the Khwarazmian city of Otrar took a turn for the worse when the Khwarazmians rejected trade relations with the Mongols. When the Mongols' merchant caravan arrived at Otrar in 1218, all but one of the Muslim merchants sent by the Mongols were executed, with one reportedly escaping to tell the tale. In addition to these executions, all of the merchants' trade goods were confiscated.

The governor of Otrar during this period was named Inalchuq (d. 1219); he also held the title of Ghayir Khan and was the relative of the Khwarazmshah's mother, Terken

Khatun. Inalchuq distrusted the Mongols' merchants, doubting that the true purpose of their visit actually concerned the Mongols' commercial interests. This attitude illustrated the tensions between sedentary polities and the pastoral nomads who lived on the peripheries of their territories and were notorious for their raiding practices. Furthermore, the Mongols often sent spies into cities, sought out weaknesses, and recruited locals when preparing for a military assault. In this light, Khwarazmian suspicions concerning Mongol activities were not entirely unreasonable.

In response to the massacre of Mongol merchants at Otrar, Chinggis Khan sent three ambassadors to the Khwarazmshah. Chinggis Khan requested reparations for the lives and goods lost as well as punishment for the governor of Otrar, Inalchuq. Rather than meeting these demands, the shah summarily executed one of the ambassadors and shaved the beards of the other two. This gross affront to diplomacy left the Mongols with no choice but military retaliation. The Khwarazmians seriously underestimated Chinggis Khan's military response, so this diplomatic crisis that began in Otrar opened the doorway for the Mongol conquests to expand into the Islamic world. Chinggis Khan even temporarily suspended military activities against the Jin in China to deal with the Khwarazmshah.

Chinggis Khan, along with his sons, engaged in widespread military campaigns in the Khwarazmian territory of Mawarannahr to exact revenge for the insults that occurred at Otrar. In 1219 Mongol troops arrived at Otrar. After a five-month siege the Mongols pillaged the city and enslaved many captives; however, many of the city's inhabitants were also killed. Inalchuq was found barricaded in the city's citadel, with little recourse left, aside from throwing bricks at the Mongols. Since as governor he was responsible for the entire situation, he was summarily executed. However, the execution of Inalchuq and the capture of the city did not end the Mongols' military activities in the region. To prevent any further resurgence of Khwarazmian dominance in the region, Mongol forces continued to conquer other areas throughout Mawarannahr and expand their domains.

ISN'T IT IRONIC?

While the Otrar Massacre was based on accusations of Mongol espionage, one of the underlying causes was greed. The caravan that arrived in Otrar was richly laden not only with gold and silver to purchase goods but also beaver and sable furs from Siberia, silks from China, and other goods. Many of these items came directly from Chinggis Khan himself. Thus, when the massacre occurred, not only did they kill people under his protection as well as his envoys, but the Khwarazmian governor also robbed the Mongol leader.

When Otrar fell, Inalchuq fought to the end, throwing ceramic roof tiles at the Mongols when he ran out of weapons. When the Mongols captured him, they decided to find a way to sate his greed. Rather than behead him, break his spine, or any other execution, the Mongols took molten silver and poured it down his throat so that in the end, greed killed Inalchuq.

In the face of this multipronged invasion, Ala' al-Din Muhammad, fled, despite the fact that he commanded a large army. He eventually died in 1221, still fleeing from Mongol troops. The Mongols wrought destruction in the region for several years, at times facing resistance from Khwarazmian troops led by the shah's son, Jalal al-Din, who also successfully evaded capture. Eventually Mongols receded from Persian territories, for the time being, and held only Mawarannahr.

Contemporary accounts attest that millions were killed in Persia and Mawarannahr during this period. While there is no doubt that many cities in the region suffered mass destruction and mass casualties, these numbers are extremely inflated. In the end, the destruction of the cities of the Khwarazmian Empire in Mawarannahr and its annexation into the Mongol Empire began a period of mourning and panic in the Islamic world, an era that was initially heralded by Chinggis Khan's mission of retribution in response to the massacre of his merchants at Otrar.

Donna Hamil

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Mawarannahr; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah; *Key Places:* Khwarazmian Empire; *Primary Documents:* Document 5

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Peace of Qatwan (1267)

After the death of Alghu in 1265–1266, Baraq became the khan of the Chagatai Khanate. He gained his position with the support of Khubilai Khan, who also promised him Qaidu's territory if he assisted Khubilai against Qaidu. Baraq accepted the challenge. Although he defeated Qaidu initially, in 1267 Qaidu and Baraq fought a major battle at Khojand, located along the Syr Darya, in which Qaidu inflicted a devastating defeat on Baraq with Jochid reinforcements sent by Mongke Temur, khan of the Golden Horde. Baraq retreated to Mawarannahr to regroup and in the process plundered Samarkand and Bukhara to fund a new army.

Before conflict arose anew between Qaidu and Baraq, the Chinggisids attempted to resolve their conflict peacefully and in the name of unity. Qaidu's envoy to Baraq was an old friend of the latter named Qipchag. Mas'ud Beg, the son of Mahmud Yalavach,

and other advisers urged Baraq to accept the invitation. As a result, the two agreed to discuss matters with Qaidu before subjecting the region to further destruction.

The continuing warfare would only send the region's economy and population into a downward spiral. The actual meeting took place in 1267 on the Qatwan steppe, south of Samarkand. In addition to the Ogodeyids and Chagatayids, the Golden Horde sent a representative. At the peace conference, it was agreed that Qaidu would receive the Ili Basin and the area known as Zhungaria (between the Altai Mountains and the Tien Shan Mountains), which consisted of much of the Chagatayid territory north of the Syr Darya River. Meanwhile, Baraq received Mawarannahr. Two-thirds of it would be Chagatayid, while the remaining third would be divided by Mongke Temur and Qaidu. The revenues of the nomads and the workshops of the two principal cities of the region, Samarkand and Bukhara, were divided between the Jochids, Qaidu, and Baraq. The Jochids had previously collected revenues from Samarkand and Bukhara but lost them during Alghu's reign. Mas'ud Beg, as a former imperial representative, would supervise the distribution of funds. Furthermore, they also divided the pastures in those vicinities, thus allowing Qaidu to maintain troops in the region. Also, Qaidu and Baraq agreed that neither princes nor troops were permitted into Samarkand or Bukhara to prevent the temptation of plundering. Finally, Qaidu and Baraq became *anda* and exchanged gifts.

Although it appeared that Baraq received the lesser end of the deal, Qaidu and the Jochids agreed to support Baraq in expanding south of the Amu Darya, at the expense of the Il-Khanate. Baraq had little alternative. With Jochid support, which included 50,000 troops, Baraq had little support, and it was doubtful that Khubilai would lend sufficient aid to Baraq to offset this advantage. Furthermore, as part of the final agreements, the Jochids, Chagatayids, and Ogodeyids sent a letter chastising Khubilai for his Sinicization of the Mongol Empire. Needless to say, the letter did not endear any of them to Khubilai. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether any of the three really wanted Khubilai to return the empire to "the good old days." With Khubilai ensconced in Daidu and not in Karakorum, he could not effectively control Central Asia; it was just too remote. Not only had they made this peace treaty without involving Khubilai, but he was not even invited, which clearly demonstrated their disdain for his authority. Mongke Temur, Qaidu, and Baraq were concerned with expanding and ruling their own territories, not the overall welfare of the former Yeke Monggol Ulus.

The main outcome of the Peace of Qatwan was that Qaidu's new state took shape. Even with the peace, and perhaps because of it, Baraq did not trust Qaidu's intentions but nonetheless took advantage of his support and began his war with the Il-Khanate. Furthermore, tensions began to develop between Qaidu and the Jochids. The Jochids felt that Qaidu owed them more gratitude for their assistance, but he clearly did not recognize anyone as his superior. War did not break out, but with his new acquisitions Qaidu was in a better position to assert his authority and independence to all challengers.

For Baraq, Qaidu's assistance was not sufficient for success in his invasion of the Il-Khanate. Qaidu's troops had orders to abandon Baraq before the battle took place. Despite some initial successes, Baraq met defeat in the Battle of Herat, where he

encountered the il-khan Abaqa in 1270. Abaqa's victory was complete, with Baraq fleeing across the Amu Darya in disorder as Qaidu's forces deserted him. Baraq, rightfully, suspected foul play on Qaidu's part and planned vengeance. Baraq died, however, before he could act in 1271. It is questionable whether he would have succeeded because most of his commanders joined Qaidu, as did Mas'ud Beg, upon Baraq's death rather than seek service with another Chagatayid candidate. With the defeat at Herat, it was clear that power had irrevocably shifted to Qaidu. With this, Mawarannahr came under Qaidu's sway.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics*: Daidu; Karakorum; *Organization and Administration*: Chagatai Khanate; Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Mahmud Yalavach; Mawarannahr

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Quriltai of 1206

In 1206 Temujin, the leader of the Mongols, convened a *quriltai* in his traditional pastures near the source of the Onon River. It is at this event that Temujin became Chinggis Khan and the Mongol Empire was formed. Although the various tribal groups of Mongolia had been subdued, it would take considerably more effort to create a stable state to ensure that peace was maintained in Mongolia. Temujin did not forget those who supported him at this event and also sought to legitimize his rule over the rest of the nomadic populace of Mongolia. The importance of the *quriltai* of 1206 should never be understated. *The Secret History of the Mongols* devotes a large section of the work to this event, listing the participants and the structure of the government in close detail.

While the normal procedure for selecting a khan involved much debate and discussion over a handful of candidates, in 1206 this was not the case. Temujin was the undisputed master of the Mongolian plateau. He had defeated his enemies and destroyed their leadership. His white *tuq* was now raised, as the shaman Teb Tenggeri informed

those assembled that heaven had decreed that Temujin as Chinggis Khan should rule them. The title itself meant firm, fierce, and strong ruler. It was a fitting title for Temujin and implied that he was superior to all other khans.

It was at this *quriltai* that Chinggis Khan made final his institutional changes to his army and government. The organization of the army was first and foremost, as it also served as the basic organization of society and the government. The *keshig* (bodyguard) was expanded to 10,000, and commanders were assigned to their units of 1,000. In the process of doing so, the defeated were dispersed and incorporated into units. Some commanders, such as Subedei and Jebe, were permitted to form units from men they had personally captured. Those, such as the Oirat and Onggirad who submitted peacefully to him, were allowed to stay in tribal units, although decimally organized. The commanders were all *nokors* (companions) and unrelated to him. Furthermore, all were those who had supported Chinggis Khan in his rise to power even in his earliest days. The basis of appointment was merit and demonstrated the egalitarian nature of Chinggis Khan's government. He was interested in talent and success, not virtue of birth or status in a traditional hierarchy, which also attracted many non-Mongols to his service. And his generosity was unstinting, as he assigned units of 1,000 to 95 commanders.

Among those awarded were the shepherd Degei and the horse herders Kishlik and Badai. All three had warned Chinggis Khan of attack at one point in his life. Others were more recognizable and had considerable experience as commanders already, such as the brothers Jelme and Subedei. Chinggis Khan also distributed territory and people to his sons and relatives. He assigned a commander to advise his sons (and watch them). It was a clear sign that while his family was important, he trusted his companions to a higher degree. He assigned Bo'orchu, a companion from his youth, as the military commander of the western portion of the empire, extending to the Altai Mountains. Muqali oversaw the east to the Qara'un Jidun Mountains (part of the Great Khingan

ONE MAN'S WIFE IS CHINGGIS KHAN'S TREASURE

Chinggis Khan forgot no one who did him a favor. In one such instance, he gave one of his wives, Ibaqa, to one of his generals, Jurchedei. Jurchedei was one of those who drank the muddy water of Lake Baljuna and had been in the forefront of the final battle against the Kereit, defeating some of Toghri'l's best units. Furthermore, he wounded Prince Seng-gum, which was seen as the turning point of the battle. In essence, Chinggis Khan viewed Jurchedei's actions as the key reason that he defeated Toghri'l and the Kereit. As a reward, Chinggis gave Ibaqa to Jurchedei.

When he did so, Chinggis Khan proclaimed to all, but directly to Ibaqa, that he did so not because he found her unattractive or of bad character but because he could think of no greater reward. Although she was no longer the wife of Chinggis Khan, her status remained that of his principal wives. Considering how much power and influence those women had, it was a very high status.

Mountains). Furthermore, Chinggis Khan awarded Muqali with the title *gui ong* (prince of state). With this title Muqali became Chinggis Khan's second-in-command.

Additionally, the *yasa* (law code) of Chinggis Khan came into effect at the *quriltai* of 1206. His adopted brother Shigi-Qutuqtu was named the *yeke jarquchi* (chief judge). Shigi-Qutuqtu was also charged with the responsibility of writing down Chinggis Khan's decrees for prosperity. These would also form much of the legal framework for the Mongol Empire. This innovation was an example of what Chinggis Khan learned from his victories. The Naiman wrote their laws and decrees, and when Chinggis Khan captured their scribes, he realized the necessity of writing in running a government.

The *quriltai* of 1206 laid the foundation for the Mongol Empire as a state. In addition to confirming Temujin as Chinggis Khan, it organized the military and society into a rational system. Chinggis Khan also assigned trusted individuals to the military units, ensuring that the military was loyal to him and not to the aristocratic tribal structure that previously existed. In the mind of Chinggis Khan, no longer were there Mongols, Tatars, Kereit, and Naiman; there were only Mongols, and all were subservient to him.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* *Quriltai; Yasa; Organization and Administration: Keshik; Muqali; Writing Systems; Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Oirat; Onggirad; *Key Events:* Teb Tenggeri, Death of; *Military:* Subedei; *Objects and Artifacts:* *The Secret History of the Mongols*

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Rabban Sawma, Mission of (1286–1288)

Arghun (r. 1284–1291), the fourth il-khan, sent four separate diplomatic missions to Europe. The second was led by Rabban Sawma (Sauma), an Onggud Turk and Nestorian Christian. Rabban Sawma's mission was to seek an alliance with European powers against the Mamluk Sultanate. While many European friars and missionaries had encountered the Church of the East on journeys to the Mongol Empire, this was the first time that a member of the Church of the East not only visited Europe but also met with cardinals, kings, and even Pope Nicholas IV (r. 1288–1292) in Rome.

Rabban Sawma, born Bar Sawma, was an Onggud Turk and a monk in the Church of the East. He was also friends with another young monk, Markos. The latter became

determined to travel to Jerusalem on pilgrimage to absolve his sins but also to visit the tombs of the fathers of the Church of the East. Bar Sawma would have nothing of it, but finally in 1275 Markos succeeded in convincing Bar Sawma to accompany him. Curiously, the year they decided to depart was also the year that Marco Polos reached China.

They left what is now Inner Mongolia and traveled to Daidu, Khubilai Khan's capital, to procure provisions and find guides as well as to receive permission from the church elders. The latter also tried to dissuade them but to no avail. Although Rabban Sawma doesn't mention it, other sources indicate that Khubilai Khan himself underwrote their journey, giving them robes and gifts to place at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. They probably also received a *paiza* from the khan, which would have greatly facilitated their journey.

Their journey took them from the Yuan Empire into Central Asia, where they also met Qaidu before moving onward to the Il-Khanate, reaching it in 1280. While there they met Mar Denha, the *catholicus* (leader) of the Church of the East. Unfortunately, the two travelers did not complete their pilgrimage to Jerusalem due to hostilities between the Il-Khanate and the Mamluk Sultanate. Nonetheless, they remained in the Il-Khanate among their Nestorian brethren and worked for Mar Denha in varying capacities. When Mar Denha died in 1281 the church leaders selected Markos, now known as Mar Yaballaha, as their new *catholicus*. His selection as *catholicus* at age 36 was partially due to his knowledge of Mongolian as well as his religious qualifications. Bar Sawma became Rabban (Master) Sawma as well.

In 1286, Arghun selected Rabban Sawma as his envoy to Europe. Rabban Sawma first traveled to Constantinople, accompanied by an Italian interpreter named Thomas of Anfossi, a Genoese, and delivered diplomatic correspondence to the Byzantine emperor, Andronicus II Palaeologus (r. 1282–1328). Undoubtedly, Rabban Sawma was to

RELICS

Rabban Sawma's travel account is sparse on details of the actual diplomatic mission other than his itinerary. He did, however, comment extensively on his visits to churches and what he saw in the towns. His particular interest, however, involved relics—personal items or even body parts of holy figures in Christianity.

In Constantinople, Rabban Sawma saw the stone bowl that Jesus used to turn water into wine, the stone that Simon Peter sat on when the cock crowed, and many other lesser items. In Rome, Rabban Sawma saw the staff of Paul as well as the reliquary where the head of the Stephen the Martyr and the hand of Ananias (who baptized Paul) were kept. These were just a few items that Rabban Sawma saw. King Philip himself displayed relics that he had, many coming into the possession of the royal family as part of the plundering of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade in 1204, including the Crown of Thorns and a piece of the True Cross. Only in England does he omit any mention of relics.

When he finally met Pope Nicholas IV, Rabban Sawma had the audacity to ask for a relic. Pope Nicholas IV (as demonstrated in the primary sources) grudgingly assented, demonstrating that even envoys liked to bring home souvenirs.

persuade the Byzantines to abandon their neutrality and join the Il-Khanate against the Mamluk Sultanate and the Golden Horde, although Rabban Sawma is silent on their diplomatic conversation. Instead in his record of his journey, he primarily discusses his religious experiences in Constantinople. After several days, he then departed for Italy.

Rabban Sawma arrived in Italy at the port of Naples in 1287. While there he witnessed, from the safety of a rooftop, a naval battle between Angevin ships (the Angevin family ruled Naples) and Aragonese from Spain. In his writings he specifically noted that in the battles he observed, no one attacked noncombatants, which was quite different from the Mongols.

From Naples Rabban Sawma went to Rome, but along the way he learned that Pope Honorius IV (r. 1285–1287) had died. Thus, when Rabban Sawma arrived in Rome, he witnessed the election process of a new pope. While it was fascinating for him, it was also frustrating, as he had orders from Arghun to meet the pope. He did meet with the cardinals and discussed how their rites differed and the state of Christianity in the Il-Khanate. While it is clear that they were slightly suspicious of Rabban Sawma's perspectives on religion, they realized that he was quite learned and permitted him to move freely. After touring the city, he then expanded his travels while awaiting the election of a new pope.

Rabban Sawma visited Tuscany and then was invited to Genoa. From there he journeyed to Lombardy and then to France, where he met King Philip IV (1285–1314), also known as Philip the Fair. Rabban Sawma explained the purpose of his mission. Philip expressed interest in the recovery of Jerusalem but at the same time remained noncommittal. He then permitted Rabban Sawma to see Paris, where Rabban Sawma remained for a month. He was particularly impressed by the university. While he exaggerates the number of scholars, the operation of the university certainly made an impression.

From France, Rabban Sawma journeyed to the court of King Edward I (r. 1272–1307) of England in London. Again Rabban Sawma presented letters from Arghun and gifts and then explained why he had traveled all the way from the Il-Khanate. After completing his mission in England, Arghun returned to Rome and met with the newly elected Pope Nicholas IV. Rabban Sawma remained in Rome and celebrated Easter there before returning to the Il-Khanate in 1288.

Ultimately, Rabban Sawma's mission achieved little. During his visits, both King Edward and King Philip expressed an interest in attacking the Mamluks, but other events prevented them from doing so. Nonetheless, the mission marked a shift in the diplomacy of the Il-Khanate. Rather than dictating terms, Arghun chose to engage in true diplomacy and, regardless of the final results, viewed the mission as a success.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Daidu; Paiza; Tabriz; *Organization and Administration:* Il-Khanate; Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Nestorian Christians; Onggud; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 28; Document 44

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Red Turban Revolt (1340s–1368)

Khubilai Khan conquered the Song dynasty in 1279 and created a new state to rule China as well as the rest of East Asia, known as the Yuan dynasty. Although his empire was vast and its power was tremendous, unfortunately the quality of its rulers and government was inferior to the talent of Khubilai. Furthermore, although many regions had become accustomed to Mongol rule, it was always resented in southern China. Eventually this led to a rebellion that drove the Mongols out of China. In the first decades resistance was crushed without hesitation, but as the Yuan rulers and government became ineffectual, rebels seized the opportunity. The last Yuan ruler, Toghon Temur, inherited a bad situation that became worse as more Chinese rebelled, including those serving in the military.

Chinese resentment was understandable. Mongol appropriation of land brought starvation to much of China toward the end of their rule. In addition, the government failed to maintain the system of dikes and levies that prevented the Huanghe (Yellow River) from flooding and changing course in 1344, leading to massive destruction and loss of life. Additionally, it created thousands of refugees. Finally, ever-increasing taxes alienated the Chinese, ranging from peasants to the aristocracy. These grievances only fueled the resentment toward foreign rule.

Several rebel states formed by the 1360s. The Yuan generals could not effectively crush them, partially because of the lack of leadership in the Yuan court. Also, the Mongol generals were often too busy with their own rivalries to pay attention to the rebels.

Although the Red Turbans consisted of a wide variety of groups and influences, the most important influences emerged from the Buddhist White Lotus secret society. The White Lotus society followed a millenarian belief of a collapse of a spiritually corrupt world, which would be replaced by one in which pain and suffering would be alleviated by the Maitreya Buddha, a messiah-like incarnation. There was no doubt that the end would be violent. The Red Turbans, so named because of the red headbands they wore, sought to hasten the end. Additionally, they wore red clothes and carried red flags. Considering the multitude of problems that existed in the Yuan Empire at the time, the message was alluring to the disillusioned and dispossessed.

Despite having one label, there was not a centralized Red Turban leadership. Operating from local cells, the Red Turbans would reappear as quickly as the Mongols could quash them. Although Red Turban groups appeared as early as the late 1320s, it was not

until the 1340s that some Red Turban groups accumulated enough followers to become a substantial threat. Although Toghon Temur initially sought to stamp them out with his armies, his Confucian advisers recommended winning their hearts to truly pacify them. The rebel armies only grew. Toghon Temur also made the fateful move in 1354 of dismissing his prime minister and commander of the military, Toqtoa, a victim of the political infighting among the Mongol generals and court. His dismissal occurred just as Toqtoa was on the verge of crushing the rebels in southeastern China and proved to be precipitous. Not only did military victory elude the Yuan, but without Toqtoa, the financial reforms he instituted were not carried out, causing financial distress and inflation. This only encouraged more discontent.

With the lull caused by Toqtoa's dismissal, the Red Turbans regrouped in southeastern China and husbanded their strength. The lull also allowed new Red Turban leaders to emerge from the shadows of those Toqtoa had destroyed. Among these Red Turbans was a monk named Zhu Yuanzhang, who was born a peasant. His family formerly had a distinguished background in the Song Empire before Mongol rule, and Zhu Yuanzhang became an important commander in the Red Turbans. With his diverse background, he was able to cultivate ties with the peasantry and the aristocracy. Yet he was not alone. The multitude of commanders made it difficult for the Mongols to crush the rebellion. While the Red Turbans' operations were occasionally coordinated, destroying one army did not deal a death blow to the movement. Even as Yuan armies crushed the Red Turbans in Shandong, their defeat had little impact on other Red Turbans. Furthermore, as the number of Red Turbans swelled, centralized leadership did not matter, particularly as the Yuan commanders acted increasingly as warlords in their own territories as imperial control continually weakened.

In 1359, the Red Turbans burned Shangdu, the Yuan's northern capital. Toghon Temur attempted to rebuild the city, but with the turmoil of the rebellions, little could be done, particularly as famine stalked northern China. Nonetheless, the city retained enough symbolic importance that rival Mongol generals vied for control, and the Red Turbans attacked it again in 1360. What was more disconcerting was that with two successful assaults on Shangdu, the Red Turbans were firmly entrenched in northern China, which had been under Mongol control since the early 13th century.

The Yuan continued their struggle, but the provinces fell one by one. With Zhu Yuanzhang's armies advancing on Daidu, Toghon Temur had little choice but to leave Daidu and China. The decision was announced on September 10, 1368. It was initially painted as a visit to Shangdu, but Toghon Temur and his court never returned to Daidu. Once the emperor traveled through the Juyong Pass, the Yuan had effectively abandoned China. Although Zhu Yuanzhang started out as just one of many commanders among the Red Turbans, his military successes soon led him to dream of becoming emperor—a goal he achieved by establishing the Ming dynasty.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Daidu; Northern Yuan; Toghon Temur; *Groups and Organizations:* White Lotus Buddhists; *Objects and Artifacts:* Great Wall; *Key Places:* Song Empire

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Shiremun's Coup (1250)

Shiremun, the grandson of Ogodei, proved to be the most important challenger to Mongke. Shiremun had been sidelined by Toregene during the *quriltai* that elected Guyuk to the throne. Toregene effectively used Shiremun's relative youth as a detrimental quality for a ruler—a significant triumph considering that Chinggis Khan himself once commented that Shiremun should be Ogodei's successor. Five years later, Shiremun's youth could no longer be used against him. Sorqoqtani's deft organization of a *quriltai* to elect her son ignored any claim to the throne that Shiremun possessed. He recognized that the *quriltai* left no room for any challengers to Mongke and sent word that he would attend the *quriltai*. To all appearances it seemed that he had no interest, but sensing the shift in political winds, Shiremun planned his own counter coup to Toluid supremacy.

Finding other like-minded Chinggisids among the Chagatayids and Ogodeyids including Naqu, Oghul Qaimish's son, Shiremun organized a secret army, hiding the troops in carts that normally hauled the large princely yurts (*gers*) of the nobility. Their plan was to arrive late to the *quriltai* but, in all appearances, ready to join the large encampment during the festivities celebrating Mongke's election. With Mongke and his supporters reveling in their victory, Shiremun's troops would emerge from their hiding places and take control of the events, through bloodshed if necessary. Unfortunately for Shiremun and Naqu, their plot was foiled by a stray camel.

With any large nomadic camp, the herds and flocks were pastured a distance away from the camp to ensure that plenty of pasture existed. Keshik, one of Mongke's falconers, noticed that a camel had wandered off from the main body of animals. While tracking the lost animal, he encountered Shiremun's camp. Initially the falconer gave little thought to the large number of wagons, as he saw many other latecomers arrive in the past few weeks. As such, he continued to search for their stray animal, looking among the animals of the new arrivals—it was quite possible that the stray would have joined up with Shiremun's camp. For the falconer, finding the animal might be tedious, but it was necessary, and their claim to the animal was easily determined, as the animals were branded with a *tamgha* (brand).

In his search, Keshik came close to the wagon-bound yurts and heard strange sounds—most likely the clanking of weapons on armor. Typically, only the women and children rode in the wagons, and certainly not fully armored. As a result, he peeked

through a door flap and saw the *ger*, easily 30 feet in circumference, filled with armed men. Keshik realized that something was amiss; he carefully extricated himself from the search and rushed back to Mongke's camp to inform the new khan. At first Mongke and his supporters did not believe the falconer. Only after a long explanation did he convince Mongke.

Troops led by Menggeser, Mongke's right-hand man, surrounded the camp. Although Shiremun and Naqu's plot had been exposed, the two had attempted to pass off their arrival as simply having good intentions and wanting join the *quriltai* and wish Mongke congratulations. Indeed, there was little else they could do, since they were surrounded. Menggeser wasted little time with formalities. His envoy informed them that "[i]t has been reported to the emperor that you are approaching with evil in your hearts. If this report is false, it will be sufficient proof for you to head to court at once, without stopping to think or hesitate. Otherwise, we are ordered to arrest you and take you there. Which of the two would you prefer?" (Juvaini 1997).

Although it appears that Menggeser offered them an opportunity to plead innocence, there was no choice. The first part of the message meant that they were going to be escorted to the court without public humiliation. Furthermore, he would not allow them to have an opportunity to launch an attack. The second option meant that Menggeser and his troops would arrest them at that moment and that any resistance would be crushed. The survivors would then be taken to Mongke. Shiremun, Naqu, and other important figures were escorted by a few horsemen while Menggeser confiscated their men's weapons. Shiremun and company entered the *quriltai* and performed all of the rituals of obeisance before the khan and took part in the festivities for three days without any questioning, although they were watched carefully.

On the fourth day the investigation began, with Mongke presiding. At the onset Mongke announced that if Shiremun, Naqu, or anyone else who had been accused was found innocent, then the accusers would be punished. The princes claimed innocence of any plot, and a servitor of Shiremun, the *atabeg* Qata Kurin, testified that the Chinggid princes were not involved but rather that he and other commanders conspired against Mongke. Qata Kurin then committed suicide. The following day Menggeser assembled a number of the *noyad* connected with the accused princes and interrogated them. Many of them included commanders of the highest rank. In the end, 77 *noyad* were executed. Shiremun, however, could not escape his fate and was also executed. His coup convinced Mongke of the need to eradicate all opposition to his rule, and the Toluid Revolution began.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Guyuk's Election; Toregene Khatun; *Organization and Administration:* Tamgha; *Individuals:* Mongke Khan; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; *Key Events:* Toluid Revolution

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Tarmashirin, Overthrow of (1334)

After 1309, the Chagatayids existed as a fairly stable state for the next 20 years but also stagnated, as their nomadic rulers did little more than extract tribute from the sedentary population and raid India. Some changes occurred with the rise of Tarmashirin (r. 1331–1334). Originally a Buddhist, he converted to Islam. Although he was not the first Muslim Chaghatayid (Mubarak Shah was the first), his conversion marks a shift in Chaghatayid policies. His conversion did not mean an immediate shift, but he favored the Muslim regions of his empire. Although there were Muslims north of the Syr Darya, Tarmashirin preferred to dwell in Mawarannahr, which shifted the political center of the empire as well.

Before becoming the ruler of the Chagatai Khanate, Tarmashirin resided in Ghazna, in modern-day Afghanistan. There he served as the *tanmachi* for the *tanma* stationed there. While he had success in raiding India, when Kebek Khan, the Chagatayid khan and Tarmashirin's brother, allied with Uzbek Khan against the Il-Khanate, Tarmashirin's forces were routed.

Tarmashirin came to the throne in 1331. Prior to his reign, he watched his brothers rule in rapid succession: first Kebek Khan (r. 1320–1327), then Eljigidei (r. 1327–1330), and finally Dore Temur (r. 1330–1331). In general, Tarmashirin's brothers adhered to the Mongol practice of religious tolerance or indifference. Eljigidei showed favor to both Nestorian Christianity and Buddhism, although there is no indication that he persecuted or oppressed Muslims. Indeed, many of the soldiers were already Muslim. Tarmashirin, however, was not only a devout Muslim but also promoted it over other religions. As a fairly recent convert, his fervor was not unexpected. Historians dwelling in the Mamluk Sultanate noted that Muslim missionaries in the Chagatai Khanate were among the most zealous in their activities.

Politically, Tarmashirin's religious affiliation created new opportunities for the Chagatai Khanate. Tarmashirin cultivated diplomatic ties with the Mamluk Sultanate as well as the Sultanate of Delhi, a Muslim state in northern India that had been the frequent target of raids from Afghanistan. Independent Muslim states were reluctant to have relations with Mongol states prior to this. The Mamluks' alliance with the Golden Horde had been arranged through Berke, a Muslim. Additionally, Tarmashirin ruled from Mawarannahr following the example of Kebek Khan and promoted trade and agriculture.

While Tarmashirin's Muslim emphasis opened new relationships with the Muslim world, it also created internal problems. While many soldiers and much of the sedentary

population in Mawarannahr was Muslim, not all of the population was so eager to embrace Islam, particularly in the eastern portion of the Khanate. For those Mongols in Moghulistan who still held shamanistic and Buddhist beliefs, they saw the conversion as a betrayal, as was Tarmashirin's move to the sedentary regions of the empire. It was clear that the two factors, like Khubilai's own changes, called into question his Mongol identity. Could one be a Muslim (or any other religion that one converted to) and sedentary and still be a Mongol? For the majority of the Chagatayids, one could not.

Another factor was how the Chagatai Khanate was ruled. Traditionally, the khan ruled from the steppes of Moghulistan with princes governing Mawarannahr and the *tanma* territory in Afghanistan. Kebek started the shift to ruling from Mawarannahr, and Tarmashirin continued it. Kebek did not place a loyal prince in charge of Moghulistan or Afghanistan. This permitted a shift in authority from the Chinggisid princes to the *noyad* (commanders) and other Chinggisid lines from the ruler's own bloodline. Combined with Tarmashirin's actions, it was simply too much change in a short period of time. Thus, in late 1334 Tarmashirin was overthrown by a rebellion of the Chagatayid princes in the region of Moghulistan, led by Dore Temur's son, Buzan.

Despite his removal, Tarmashirin's actions laid the foundation for a deeper split within the khanate. The eastern portion became known increasingly as Moghulistan. It was not quite Mongolia, but in the eyes of those who dwelt in Mawarannahr, for all intents and purposes Moghulistan was truly the place of the Mongols, by which they meant nomads. Furthermore, it marked a religious border that predated the Mongol era. Moghulistan remained pagan with a sizable Buddhist population. Christians (even Catholics) existed along with Muslims, but the majority were shamanistic or Buddhist. While the sedentary population might have viewed nomads in a pejorative manner, the Mongols viewed being nomads as a positive aspect and remained true to their ways. Indeed, they considered themselves as stalwart protectors of the heritage of the Mongol Empire. Those who remained in the western portion (Mawarannahr) converted to Islam over time. Although the cities remained Sunni, the nomads adopted Islam from Sufis. While nomads existed in Mawarannahr, the commercial cities carried greater importance because of the lucrative wealth of the overland caravan routes. With a fissure based not only on religion and geography but also on fundamental identity, the Chagatayid state entered into a chaotic period of succession struggles, a breakdown in the social hierarchy and order that accelerated the fragmentation of the Chagatai Khanate and ultimately laid the foundation for Timur-i Leng's rise.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; Mawarannahr; Moghulistan; *Tanmachi*; *Individuals:* Timur-i Leng; *Key Events:* Mongol Conversion to Islam; *Military:* *Tanma*; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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Tatar Yoke

Much of what we know about the Golden Horde originates from Russian sources, which naturally centered on the khanate's interactions with the Rus' principalities. Many of these interactions involved the collection of taxes and tribute and related activities, which included the establishment of a census. The census was also used to determine the number of troops that each region could provide to the Mongol armies. During the census, the population was organized into decimal units of household. The intrusion of the census and Mongol officials and the payment of tribute caused great resentment and sometimes riots among the Rus'. Violence against the Mongols then resulted in retaliation. Combined with the fact that the Mongols were either pagans or Muslim infidels, the Russian Church chronicles rarely had anything positive to say about the Mongols. As a result, the vitriol in the sources painted Mongol rule over the Rus' as the Mongol or Tatar (as the Mongols became known in Russia) Yoke. Russian nationalist historians used the Tatar Yoke to explain every misery known to Russia, particularly why Russia was backward compared to Western Europe.

Two schools of Russian nationalist history thought evolved in the 18th and 19th centuries. The first was that the Tatar or Mongol Yoke was oppressive, but the Rus' gained no benefit from the Mongols, as they lived in the steppes and did not mix with the Rus' except to gather taxes and soldiers when necessary. In this school of thought, all of Russia's success was forged in the crucible of a struggle against the Mongols and the resulting liberation from the Tatar Yoke in the Battle of Kulikovo Pole. Other historians, such as N. M. Karamzin, took a dissenting view. He did not dismiss the oppression caused by the Tatar Yoke but argued that Mongol rule provided some benefits.

In Karamzin's view, the Rus' united under the Mongols. Prior to the Mongol conquest, the region was fraught with civil war, which would have continued. While the Tatar Yoke contributed to the unification of Russia, Karamzin argued that its success and glory were due to the Russian struggle for liberation.

In the 20th century another historian, Nicholas Riasanovksy, argued that the Mongols also contributed to the autocratic nature of the Muscovite state. Riasanovsky and others contended that the Russians did learn and adopt from the Mongols, but everything they did gain was oppressive in nature. Furthermore, Mongol rule eliminated Russian contact with Western Europe, thus mitigating the influence of the Renaissance

and other intellectual movements, making Russia backward by comparison. In this view, everything negative about Russian government, society, and culture was due to the Mongols. Anything positive was attributed to the Byzantine Empire through the conduit of the Orthodox Church.

Scholars from outside of Russia disagreed with these views. Although they did not discount an oppressive rule by the Mongols, they also argued that the Mongols made many positive contributions. Furthermore, they contended that the Mongols did not cause any perceived backwardness. More recent scholarship has demonstrated that many of the aspects that made Russia a powerful state came directly from the Mongol Empire, including military reforms, political institutions, and much of the administrative apparatus.

It has also been noted that much of the perceived backwardness of Russia in comparison with Western Europe had little to do with the Mongols. Indeed, international trade blossomed for the Rus' principalities during the Golden Horde period, as did connections with other parts of the world, through the conduit of the unified Mongol Empire and beyond its borders. Rus' princes regularly went to the court of the Golden Horde in Sarai or even to Karakorum. In both places, they were exposed to a variety of cultures and civilizations, not to mention ideas. While certainly some chafed under Mongol rule, others such as Alexander Nevsky embraced it and functioned very much in the capacity of a Mongol official. It was not simple coercion. Furthermore, as the Mongols did grant the Rus' princes a great deal of autonomy, their rule was less intrusive than in many other regions.

That the Renaissance did not occur in Russia was largely a product of power structures. Merchants had a very low standing in Russian society during the 15th and 16th centuries, whereas in Italian society their standing and wealth were what drove the development of the Renaissance through patronage. As for the Reformation, the Orthodox Church in Russia did undergo some reform, but in general it viewed both the Catholics and the Protestants as schismatics at best and heretics at worst. In either case, the Russians had little desire to experience the turmoil that accompanied the Reformation era. Finally, while many of the early czars may have sought to rule like Mongols (and indeed even conceived of Muscovy as a Mongol successor), the reign of a powerful ruler such as Peter the Great was based on that of King Louis XIV of France.

While one should not dismiss that Mongol rule could be onerous and even oppressive, Mongol rule among the Rus' was no more oppressive than that of any other region. In many ways, it was less. Nonetheless, the Tatar Yoke remains a trope in Russian nationalist history and even in world history textbooks in other countries.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Sarai; *Organization and Administration:* Alexander Nevsky; Golden Horde; *Individuals:* Batu; *Groups and Organizations:* Tatars; *Key Events:* Kulikovo Pole, Battle of; *Military:* Kalka River, Battle of the

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Teb Tenggeri, Death of (1206)

Teb Tenggeri was a shaman who prophesied Temujin's rise to power and became a threat to Chinggis Khan but whose power required a certain finesse in getting rid of him.

With the *quriltai* of 1206, Chinggis Khan went from being Temujin, transformed from a ruler who ruled with the consent of his companions, to one ruled through his commanders. The difference was that with the companions (*nokod*), he had to maintain their support and loyalty. They could always leave and seek service elsewhere. Temujin had been a *nokor* to Toghril Ong Khan. With the transition to Chinggis Khan, he became the undisputed master of Mongolia. Ruling through consent was no longer enough. While he still listened to his supporters, he also issued commands that were expected to be followed. The transition of the roles of the *nokor* to *noyan* (companion) to commander is exemplified best in the conflict between Chinggis Khan and the shaman Teb Tenggeri of the Qongqotan.

One might not typically consider a shaman to be a *nokor*, but shamans played an important function in 13th-century Mongolia not only in their spiritual-religious functions but also as advisers and even leaders. Teb Tenggeri's importance to Chinggis Khan was twofold: for his traditional duties and because he also foretold Chinggis Khan's rise to power and thus legitimized him. Some scholars believe that Teb Tenggeri's later execution was due to Chinggis Khan's fear that the shaman might revoke his divine favor and endow it upon another, such as a brother. By executing him, Chinggis Khan removed that threat and also allowed himself to communicate directly with the spirit world and with Koko Mongke Tenggri (Blue Eternal Sky), who was the primary god.

Is this an accurate depiction of the motivations for Teb Tenggeri's execution? After the 1206 *quriltai*, Teb Tenggeri attempted to expand his influence and power and that of the Qongqotan clan. Teb Tenggeri and his brothers beat up Jochi Qasar, Chinggis Khan's brother, and took some of his people. When Qasar complained to Chinggis Khan, his brother simply dismissed him, as Chinggis Khan was preoccupied with other matters, such as the organization of his new realm. He further instructed his brother to deal with it himself. One might be surprised by Chinggis Khan's attitude in this affair; however, we should consider that one of Chinggis Khan's maxims for his army was that any commander who could not keep his unit in order should be replaced by another more capable leader. Keeping in mind that Chinggis Khan's relationship with Qasar had been tenuous for several years, the idea that Chinggis Khan would support a nonfamily member over a relative is not surprising.

Teb Tenggeri fueled the animosity between Chinggis Khan and his brother by informing the khan that he had another vision. In this he saw that Temujin would first rule but then Qasar would rule. Teb Tenggeri advised Chinggis Khan that if he did not do something, there was no telling when Qasar would take over. Only the intervention of their mother, Hoelun, prevented Qasar's execution. Despite this, Chinggis Khan nonetheless stripped Qasar of 1,400 of his people, a severe punishment, as it lessened not only his brother's social status but also his economic potential.

Emboldened by Chinggis Khan's actions against his brethren, Teb Tenggeri also gathered others from the horse stations of Chinggis Khan and forcibly took people from Temuge Otchigin, Chinggis Khan's youngest brother. Temuge Otchigin sent Soqor, one of his men, to the camp of Teb Tenggeri to demand the restoration of his people. Not surprisingly, Soqor was beaten and then forced to kneel before Teb Tenggeri.

Temuge Otchigin then complained to Chinggis Khan. Chinggis Khan's initial reaction was similar to when Qasar came before him; however, Borte intervened. She admonished the ruler and questioned what would remain of his empire for his sons should Chinggis Khan remain uninvolved. With that, Chinggis Khan summoned Teb Tenggeri. Teb Tenggeri came with his brothers. Chinggis Khan chastised Teb Tenggeri but said that he and Temuge Otchigin should settle their differences outside the yurt. Teb Tenggeri followed Temuge Otchigin outside, where he was seized by guards and had his back broken. The body was then disposed of, and Temuge returned to the yurt. Teb Tenggeri's brothers became aware of what happened and menaced Chinggis Khan. He then abruptly declared that he was leaving. Surprised, the brothers permitted the khan to leave. When they followed they found themselves surrounded by the *keshik*. After the execution, Chinggis Khan reasserted his authority and admonished Monglik, a *nokor* of Chinggis Khan's father Yesugei, for the pride of his sons and their attempt to usurp his authority.

Despite this instance of favoritism toward the commanders over family members, the elevation of another elite to counter Chinggis Khan's family did serve its purpose. Chinggis Khan ruled his empire indirectly through his companions. Typically in other nomadic empires the khan and his family ruled directly, but by taking or reducing familial involvement, the state's power increased, as did its responsibilities, while that of the family diminished. The influence of Chinggis Khan's family never disappeared, but its power was mitigated. Elevation of the commanders served as a counterweight and gave the commander a vested interest in the success of the empire and not necessarily in the interests of particular princes. At the same time, it was clear that all were subject to the will of the khan.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Shamanism; *Organization and Administration:* *Keshik*; *Individuals:* Borte; Chinggis Khan; *Key Events:* *Quriltai* of 1206; Yesugei, Death of

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Toluid Revolution (1250)

After the death of Guyuk the empire again came to a halt, as his wife and regent Oghul Qaimish demonstrated no signs of organizing a *quriltai* to select a new khan. Into this vacuum stepped the heirs of Tolui. Conspiring with Batu, they successfully wrested the throne from the house of Ogodei and then ensured that only a Toluid would sit on the throne.

They planned a *quriltai* to ensure the support of the majority of the Mongol princes, but it was advertised as an initial meeting to discuss candidates for the throne at Ala Qamaq. A second *quriltai* would then be held for the coronation. Oghul Qaimish did not attend the *quriltai*, but her sons Khoja and Naqu stayed for two days. They left a representative with instructions to vote along the lines of the other Chinggisids, assuming that they would be nominated. Their cavalier attitude cost them dearly, as only Mongke's name garnered enough support for a vote. When it came time for the election, Temur Noyan, their representative, agreed with the other princes and voted for Mongke and also agreed that the sons of Guyuk should be regents until the *quriltai* for the coronation.

Naqu and Khoja were dismayed and plotted to remove Mongke from contention by setting an ambush along his route from Ala Qamaq to the Onan-Kerulen region. They executed the ambush poorly, as Mongke passed safely through before Khoja and Naqu could deploy their men.

Although Oghul Qaimish's sons were named regents at the Ala Qamaq *quriltai*, she continued to rule as the queen regent. Khoja and Naqu held separate courts in opposition to Oghul Qaimish, causing a rift between mother and sons. Still miffed by the *quriltai*, Khoja and Naqu sent a letter that they would not consent to the election of another khan other than one of themselves.

With the empire in disorder, the second *quriltai* was held in Mongolia in 1250. Sorqoqtani and Batu actively lobbied for Mongke. Although he had been the clear favorite at the first *quriltai*, there was still opportunity for dissent and debate due to the absence of so many Ogodeyids and Chagatayids at the first *quriltai*. The Jochids and Toluids supported Mongke. Most of the Ogodeids and Chagatayids postponed making their decision, as they felt that the throne should stay in the line of Ogodei. A message was sent to Oghul Qaimish and her sons telling them to appear at the *quriltai*.

Naqu set out for the *quriltai* after receiving the message, but Khoja continued to delay along with his supporters. They thought that the *quriltai* would surely not start without them. They were wrong. Impatient with the delays, the *quriltai* proceeded, and Mongke was placed on the throne.

Naqu missed the coronation but joined his cousin Shiremun in attempting a coup. It was foiled but set the stage for the Toluid Revolution. After a number of non-Chinggisids were executed following an investigation, Mongke began a massive purge of the Ogodeids and Chagatayids and their supporters. Detachments were sent throughout the empire with a list of suspects and conducted tribunals. While the actual coup attempt was conducted by a relative handful, Mongke was determined to root out all those who may have sympathized with the effort. With few exceptions, those not purged were sent to fight in the Song Empire. Shiremun and Oghul Qaimish were executed, and no one was immune from suspicion. Even Chinqai, the chancellor of the empire, was purged due to his close ties to the Ogodeyid lineage. The Ogodeid patrimony largely disappeared from the map, as did the sons and grandsons of Ogodei, with Qaidu being the most notable survivor. Meanwhile, the Chagatayid patrimony remained largely intact but with fewer Chagatayids.

The Toluid Revolution also benefited the Jochids. While it was unlikely that Guyuk's sons may have attacked Batu, his realm was now secure. The Jochids may have even seen an expansion of their patrimony at the expense of the Ogodeyids. The big winners, however, were the Toluids.

While force of arms and political scheming placed Mongke on the throne, he realized that he alone was insufficient to legitimate his rule. Although Chinggis Khan had transformed into a hallowed figure not long after his death, Mongke instituted a true cult of Chinggis Khan in 1252 with official ceremonial worship. He also posthumously promoted his father, Tolui, to the status of emperor and made him the object of official veneration. Mongke also wrapped himself in the mantle of the *yasa* and *yosun* of Chinggis Khan and also did his utmost to live up to that reputation. While most of the latter chronicles were written by pro-Toluid authors, Mongke emphasized that the Ogodeyids forfeited their right to rule. Mongke argued that Oghul Qaimish did not perform her duties, and neither did her sons. Thus, it was incumbent open others to seize the reins of leadership. Two *quriltais* had been convened, which provided opportunity for the heirs of Ogodei to make their intentions known and claim the throne, but they chose not to participate. Whether or not the Toluids or Jochids would have heeded their claims if they had made an effort is a moot point, as Mongke emerged victorious.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Guyuk's Election; *Individuals:* Mongke Khan; Oghul Qaimish Khatun; Tolui Khan; *Key Events:* Shiremun's Coup

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William of Rubruck, Journey of (1253–1255)

William of Rubruck came from northern France or what is today Belgium. Little is known of his early life, but he spent a considerable amount of time in Paris. While in Paris he became known by King Louis IX of France (1214–1270) and accompanied him on the Seventh Crusade (1248–1254). Although there is no evidence that William accompanied Louis to Egypt, William was at Acre in Palestine. Thus, when Louis conceived of forming an alliance with the Mongols against the Muslims, William became a natural choice to serve in this capacity.

One reason for his selection was that William was a Franciscan. With vows of poverty and other characteristics, no one would confuse him with the status of a king's envoy. Although he carried letters on behalf of King Louis IX, William did not serve as an envoy. William's journey was to be primarily religious in nature, as he hoped not only to convert the Mongols to Christianity but also to attend to the spiritual needs of the German miners who were captured in the Battle of Liegnitz. This suited Louis's needs as well. King Louis IX was not only a very spiritual man, but he was also keen to prevent any idea that when his letters and gifts were presented it was a form of tribute or submission. This had accidentally happened once before, and King Louis wanted to prevent any further misunderstanding.

William did not travel alone. He was accompanied by another Franciscan, Bartholomew of Cremona (located in northern Italy), a man named Gosset who was in charge of the presents that King Louis IX sent to the Mongol court, and also their interpreter 'Abd Allah. It is evident from William's report that 'Abd Allah's abilities as an interpreter were lacking.

The party departed from Acre and headed to Constantinople. On May 7, 1253, they departed from there and sailed to the Crimean port of Sudak and then went to the camp of Sartaq, the son of Batu, who was rumored to be Christian. Although Sartaq welcomed them, he forward the missionaries to his father's *ordo* on the Volga. Batu then sent William to Karakorum. His lack of official status did hinder some progress, as various Mongol commanders expected gifts, and he experienced some difficulty in gaining audiences with Mongke and other figures.

Nonetheless, William took advantage of the situation and mingled with lower-ranking officials and others who happened to be in the Mongol camps. He also took part in a religious debate where he teamed with Muslims and Nestorians against Buddhists and Daoists. He did gain a private audience with Mongke but failed in his efforts to find the German miners. In his discussions with Mongke concerning King Louis, it was clear that an alliance was impossible without Louis's submission.

Like John of Plano Carpini, William of Rubruck left a detailed report. It is different from his predecessor's, as it is not as hostile. For John, the Mongols were mysterious

and had recently invaded, but for William, the invasions were over 10 years ago. The Mongols had not threatened Christendom since then. William was to view them as a potential ally. Finally, William's own personality affected his observations. Although the view that nomads were ignorant barbarians and that heretics were misguided and damned, William believed that these issues could be corrected. In his interactions with other Christians, he sought to correct them when possible. For the nomads, he viewed that the road to civilization was through salvation. If they adopted Christianity, then the rest would follow. Unlike his predecessor and the general view of the church at the time, he believed that the Mongols did not have to completely abandon their culture to become Christian. William found kumiss delightful, and it would not need to be abandoned should a nomad convert to Christianity. Indeed, he preferred kumiss over wine at times. Since kumiss was associated with paganism, most missionaries deemed it inherently bad.

William's report, written primarily for King Louis IX, is very observant. Much of it details his journey as well as the customs and cultures of the Mongols. William also spent much time with various people who had been captured by the Mongols and now were servants or slaves. By and large his experiences with them do not suggest that they were unhappy, and for some life may have been markedly better after they came to the Mongol court, such as Master William Buchier, a French goldsmith who fashioned a mechanical fountain in the shape of a tree for Mongke Khan. From this fountain flowed distilled kumiss, wine, a honey-based drink, and rice wine. Judging from William's report of the drinking sessions at Mongke's court, the fountain was in frequent use.

Despite his intention to remain within the Mongol Empire, William eventually was sent back to Europe with letters for King Louis IX. His return journey replicated his travel to Karakorum for the most part. From Batu's *ordo* William then went south through Derbent and into Transcaucasia and eventually returned to Acre. He remained there and forwarded his report to King Louis and concluded that if any further missions were to be sent to the Mongols, it would be better to send a true envoy and not a friar. William appears to have concluded that converting the Mongols was not likely.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Ordo; *Individuals:* Mongke Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Nestorian Christians; *Key Events:* John of Plano Carpini, Journey of; *Military:* Liegnitz, Battle of; *Objects and Artifacts:* Kumiss; *Primary Documents:* Document 16; Document 17; Document 18; Document 19; Document 23

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Yesugei, Death of (ca. 1174/1175)

Yesugei, the father of Temujin, the future Chinggis Khan, was a rising leader among the Mongols. Much of his position was derived not only from being born into an aristocratic line but also from his deeds. He had taken part in successful raids against the Jin Empire and won victories against the Tatars. Yesugei acquired two brides in his life, including Hoelun, whom he took by force from the Merkit. Furthermore, he assisted his *anda*, Toghril Ong Khan, in claiming the throne of the Kereit. With his rise to power, Yesugei made several enemies and aroused jealousy among other Mongol leaders. His death, however, triggered a sequence of events that threw the steppes into turmoil and allowed the rise of Chinggis Khan.

Although Yesugei stole his bride, an Onggirad, from the Merkit, they never retaliated in his lifetime. The Jin Empire also seemed incapable of attacking Yesugei directly but could use proxies such as the Tatars, who were the sworn enemies of Yesugei. Their feud began when the Tatars took the Mongol khan Ambagai prisoner and handed him over to the Jin Empire in the 1150s. At this time Yesugei was very young. He grew up as a warrior fighting the Tatars. Despite Yesugei's successes, the Tatars broke Mongol power in eastern Mongolia, leaving the Mongols fragmented and considerably weakened. Nonetheless, Yesugei was able to maintain a sizable following. Furthermore, he continued to defeat the Tatars, even capturing a few leaders, naming Temujin after one of them to celebrate his victory.

Yesugei's death was unexpected. It occurred during a betrothal journey. He and a handful of followers set out to secure a bride for Temujin. Yesugei had planned to take Temujin to Hoelun's clan, the Olkunuud, who were a subgroup of the Onggirad, but along the way he encountered Dai-Sechen, the leader of another subgroup of the Onggirad. Dai-Sechen offered his daughter Borte to be Temujin's wife. As part of the betrothal agreement, Temujin remained with Dai-Sechen.

As Yesugei journeyed back to his own camp, he and his men rested at another camp. According to the protocol of the steppes, hospitality is offered to all, as everyone inevitably had to seek food and shelter from others at some point. Unfortunately, it was a Tatar camp, and they recognized Yesugei. Temptation for vengeance outweighed protocol, so the Tatars poisoned his food. This permitted Yesugei to leave and die elsewhere. The murder of such a person while a guest would have been taboo, a violation of not only steppe custom but also the customs of the Tatars.

Yesugei felt sick on his return to camp and ordered that Temujin should return to him. Temujin returned and found himself without a father. Yesugei's death also complicated other matters beyond the family. None of his sons were of age to assume leadership of the family or Yesugei's following. As a result, many of Yesugei's *nokod* (sing. *nokor*), or followers/bondsmen, deserted. The wives of Yesugei's rivals among the Taiyichiud excluded Hoelun from participating in sacrificial rites. It was a not so subtle indication of her loss of status. Furthermore, many of Yesugei's followers and their families joined the Taiyichiud, deserting Hoelun and her children. Hoelun successfully shamed many into remaining, but they then abandoned her under the cover of night.

THE ANDA BOND

The *anda* relationship was a tie that transcended familial relationships. Akin to the concept of blood brothers, the *anda* relationship was made between two unrelated men. The most well-known *andas* were Temujin (Chinggis Khan) and Jamuqa, but Yesugei was also the *anda* of Toghril, the Kereit leader. The relationship could be formed at the age as demonstrated when Jamuqa and Temujin became *anda* in their childhood. Yesugei and Toghril, on the other hand, were adults. The importance of the *anda* bond was that it allowed a way to transcend family relationships in a tribal society. In this manner, it was possible to forge a bond or alliance with a leader of another group that had no other common bond.

Becoming *anda* involved a ceremony, which was often private. Both men would make a cut on one of their hands, drip the blood into a cup, and then drink the intermingled blood. They also exchanged gifts. As *anda*, the two men were bound together and obligated to help the other and potentially their offspring. Like any relationship it was not perfect, as rivalry and jealousy could rupture the bond as it did between Jamuqa and Chinggis Khan. Nonetheless, it was a relationship that was not lightly undertaken. Curiously, the practice of *anda* faded during the period of the Mongol Empire, most likely as the need for alliances faded with the creation of the Yeke Monggol Ulus.

Those who remained were forced to leave by the Taiyichiud. They even killed one servant who attempted to stop them.

While sad, the abandonment is not unusual. The supporters of Yesugei were *nokod*. Without Yesugei to lead them, they were unlikely to gain any booty from raids. Thus, there was little incentive to remain. Their loyalty was to Yesugei, not his family. This was normal behavior among the steppe nomads.

The Secret History of the Mongols paints a picture in which Temujin and his family were abandoned by all. It is not clear if it was complete and total or whether it was just dramatized. Some family members, such as cousins, may have remained. Nonetheless, the point was that Temujin's family had a fall from their previous status and were considerably less well off.

Regardless of whether they were completely abandoned or abandoned just by non-family members, the event was undoubtedly a traumatic moment in Temujin's life. It would lead to a feud with the Taiyichiud and would help explain Temujin's emphasis on loyalty not only to himself but also to his family. Finally, the Tatars' murder of his father was never forgotten and fueled his animosity toward them, even more so than the previous feuds between the Tatars and the Mongols. Furthermore, it left Temujin vulnerable and exposed to attacks by others such as the Taiyichiud and Merkit, forcing him to seek aid from others such as his father's *anda*, Toghril.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Borte; Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kereit; Merkit; Onggirad; *Key Places:* Jin Empire

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MILITARY

OVERVIEW ESSAY

The military of the Mongol Empire was arguably the greatest in world history. The Mongol armies conquered an empire that stretched from the Sea of Japan to the Mediterranean Sea and from the Persia Gulf into the forests of Siberia, creating the largest contiguous empire in history. Unlike the vast empires of the 19th century, the Mongols did not hold a vast technological edge over the conquered peoples as the various European powers did during the conquest of the New World or when they extended their control over Africa in the 19th century. Nor did the Mongols benefit from contagious diseases that decimated the native population as did the various expanding powers of Western Europe as they moved into New World. At the onset of their conquests, the Mongols faced empires with larger populations, such as the Jin Empire and the Song Empire. Technologically speaking, the Mongols possessed a superior bow, but in terms of other arms and armor they possessed no advantage. In terms of siege warfare, the Mongols were novices in their first endeavors and succeeded more by luck and perseverance. While the Black Plague struck the Mongols, it decimated the ruling population as much as it did their subjects and the populace of neighboring regions. Some scholars suggest that the death toll of the ruling Mongols may have undermined their ability to rule. Also, they met new rising powers, such as the Khwarazmian Empire, which was equally dynamic. The Khwarazmian Empire is little known today, but if not for one fateful decision, it may have ranked as one of the greatest empires in history. So what, then, gave the Mongols their military edge?

A number of factors are involved in answering this question, the first of which was the genius of Chinggis Khan, who learned and adapted to new challenges as he rose to power. While he frequently innovated to meet changing conditions, he also recognized the value in existing tactics, strategies, and institutions and adopted them as needed, though he also perfected them when he could. One such example was the decimal organization. While other steppe empires used decimal organization for their armies, such as the Xiongnu Empire (209 BCE–93 CE), Chinggis Khan used it to organize not only his military but his entire society as well. This innovation allowed him to better mobilize troops and the resources needed for the army. Furthermore, it helped him create a single unified state rather than a tribal confederation, such as the Xiongnu state.

While the core of the Mongols' battle tactics and strategies were centuries old and refined from other steppe nomads, such as the feigned retreat and encircling strategies,

Chinggis Khan then innovated new strategies that allowed him to defeat other steppe nomads, such as the Naiman in the Battle of Chakirmaut (1204) and the Battle of the Irtysh River (1209). The Mongols also instituted formalized training that permitted generals such as Subedei to operate on far-ranging operations and succeed against numerically superior armies, such as in the Battle of the Kalka River (1224). The inability of sedentary armies to defeat Mongol armies was most apparent in the Battle of Liegnitz (1241), but this battle also demonstrated the capability of Mongol commanders. While Liegnitz was a great Mongol victory, it was not achieved by Subedei or any of the Mongols' other great leaders. The Mongol commanders had a consistent level of training that would not be matched until the modern era.

While a popular image of the Mongols is that of overwhelming hordes (derived from *ordo*, meaning "camp"), it was their disciplined armies and the training of their generals that mattered most. On occasion the Mongols could assemble massive armies, such as for the invasion of Europe, but they primarily relied on smaller forces to hold and expand territory. These were known as *tmmas* and were commanded by a *tammachi*. The most notable *tammachi* was Chormaqan, who conquered not only Iran but also Transcaucasia, which included modern-day Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia. As the Mongol armies primarily consisted of horse archers who possessed extra horses, pasture was always a primary concern. As a result, the *tamma* units had to be dispersed to ensure adequate grazing lands. Nonetheless, they maintained contact with each other through scouts known as *alginchin*, who also ensured that the *tmmas* were not attacked by surprise.

The Mongols also augmented their control of territories by incorporating local armies into their own forces. Nomads became Mongols, being not only recruited into the decimal system but also receiving a haircut so they became physically similar to the Mongols. The idea was to erase their past so the nomads no longer viewed themselves as Naiman or Kipchaks or any other tribe. Sedentary units became *cheriks*, a Mongolian term for "soldier." These units were not expected to fight with Mongol techniques because they were rarely horse archers. Rather, the Mongols permitted them to continue in their own manner. While the *cheriks* were not organized in decimal fashion, their lands were; the Mongols conducted a census to determine how many men each region in their empire could provide. Still, the *cherik* troops could provide a decisive edge in battle, as the Georgians did in the Battle of Kose Dagh (1243).

At the onset of his conquests, Chinggis Khan gave little indication that he would create a vast empire. Most of his actions demonstrate a concern for securing Mongolia from outside threat and ensuring stability, which was desirable after 20 or more years of warfare. Nonetheless, Chinggis Khan did establish an empire. Part of it was by accident, as more and more rulers submitted to him because he could offer better protection against threats or, as happened frequently in the Jin Empire, governors and generals lost faith in their ruler and viewed Chinggis Khan as a better alternative. After Chinggis Khan's death, Ogodei Khan and his successors looked around and saw the empire Chinggis Khan built and could only rationalize it with the idea that the Koke Mongke Tenggeri (Blue Eternal Sky) bequeathed Earth to Chinggis Khan and his successors. It was their obligation to rule the world. With an ideology that fueled an almost holy war

fervor, the Mongols employed what scholars have termed the tsunami strategy to conquer an even grander empire.

The tsunami strategy utilized the *tamma* units and the *cherik* troops, allowing the Mongols to maximize their armies and also not overextend them. Thus, while large armies could be brought to conquer territories, they were not necessarily meant to occupy them. After the campaign, the main armies demobilized and returned to the steppes to rest and recuperate. The armies comprised pastoral nomads who developed excellent military skills through their livelihood, which consisted of daily riding, hunting, herding, and shooting; they were not professional soldiers. Thus, they resumed their daily lives in between campaigns.

While the nomads could make their own weapons and armor, the Mongol Empire also relocated skilled artisans from conquered regions. Many were moved to Karakorum or Chinqai Balasaghun in Mongolia, the latter becoming a manufacturing center. Here artisans made lamellar and chain mail armor as well as weapons, such as swords and lances. The government of the Mongol Empire also contracted with individuals to provide arrows to ensure that their armies were adequately supplied.

One thing that the Mongols needed early in their conquests was expertise in siege warfare. The Mongols had limited ability in this area, and their first major siege in Xi Xia almost ended in disaster. Gradually, though, they acquired the expertise necessary to conduct proper sieges. Not only did they use recruits who deserted to them or came from the conquered, but the Mongols also developed their own siege engineers. Only with this new ability in siege warfare were the Mongols able to destroy the Jin Empire, particularly at the sieges of Kaifeng (1233) and Caizhou (1234). As the Mongols' ability to conduct effective sieges improved, they quickly mastered the techniques for transporting and employing siege equipment. At the Battle of Mohi (1241), the Mongols not only demonstrated the brilliance of their battle tactics but also employed trebuchets as field artillery to take a fortified bridge, a rare occurrence in medieval warfare. Furthermore, the location of the city mattered little. The Siege of Baghdad (1257–1258) demonstrated the Mongols' mastery in both siege warfare and operational warfare, as they effectively isolated the Abbasid Caliphate from all assistance, destroyed its armies, and then captured the city using not only the Mongol armies of conquest but also existing *tamma* forces and *cherik* troops.

Their success in siege warfare was marked by the Mongols' use of new weaponry (or at least new to them). In this sense, the Mongols became a major reason for the spread of military technology. While the Mongols are well known in history for playing a role in the spread of gunpowder technology, they also assisted in the spread and popularity of lamellar armor and sabers. Trebuchets were another weapon that saw diffusion across Eurasia. In East Asia traction trebuchets were common, but in the Middle East the Mongols adopted counterweight trebuchets, where they had been in use since the late 12th century. During his reign, Khubilai Khan acquired a team of Muslim engineers to build counterweight trebuchets for him. The result was the acceleration of the conquest of the Song Empire.

Counterweight trebuchets were the ultimate siege weapon until the advent of the cannon. Although gunpowder had been in use since the 10th century, it was mainly in

incendiary form rather than explosive. The Mongols encountered gunpowder weapons during their conquest of the Jin Empire and then again against the Song Empire. While they also used them in their wars in East Asia, there is no conclusive evidence to suggest that gunpowder in any form was used outside of East Asia. Nonetheless, gunpowder recipes did make their way outside of China, reaching the Middle East and Europe. No significant progress was made in its use, though, until the later 14th century, although cannons appeared in the Mongol Empire in the late 13th century, after the fall of the Song Empire.

It is not clear how the Mongols used cannons in the Yuan Empire, because their attempts to expand the empire came to an end with the invasion of Java during the reign of Kubilai Khan. Nonetheless, cannon technology slowly filtered from the Yuan Empire and made its way westward. What is notable is the similarity between the early cannons of Europe and those of China.

Yet even with the Mongol military's ability to adapt to new circumstances, they were not invincible. The dissolution of the Mongol Empire ended the rapid expansion of the empire, and defeats, such as the Battle of Ayn Jalut (1260), demonstrated that a well-trained army, such as that of the Mamluks, could not only defeat the Mongols but could also successfully resist them over the long term.

Even though the Mongol Empire halted its expansion in the 13th century, it remained a potent military force. By the reign of Mongke, the Mongols had an army of 1 million men, counting only the nomadic population. When one includes the *cherik* armies, the number easily doubles. Yet after the dissolution of the Mongol Empire much of the Mongols' martial energies were directed at themselves as civil war broke out throughout the empire. Nonetheless, even after the civil wars dwindled, the Mongol influence on military affairs remained omnipresent. Others adopted Mongol forms of warfare, including the rising power of Muscovy. A former vassal of the Golden Horde, Muscovy realized that the most effective way to fight the Mongols was to fight as a Mongol. The tactics of steppe warfare remained dominant until the 16th century, when adequate artillery and massed bodies of muskets could effectively break the formations of horse archers. While Mongol prowess remained legendary, serious study of Mongol warfare did not occur until the 20th century, when some military theoreticians began to conceive of new ways to implement mechanized warfare after witnessing the horrors of trench warfare on the Western Front during World War I. While still underappreciated, the Mongol military is now gaining the recognition it deserves.

Alginchi

The noun *alginchi* (pl. *alginchin*) as used in the *The Secret History of the Mongols* refers to a scout; a member of a scouting group, which could be large; or the commander of a group of such scouts. The word also occurs in verbal forms, *alginčilaqu* and the causative *alginčila'ulqu*, meaning "send as a scout" or "cause to be sent as a scout."

In the oldest references to the word in the Mongol epic chronicle, an *alginchi* was simply an advanced scout. For example, no less a personage than Mongolian ancestral

figure Bodonchar went out as an *alginchi*, during which expedition he captured a pregnant woman from a disorganized *bolok irgen*, a small group, which “knew neither great nor small or bad nor good,” that is, had no hierarchy or no one to rule it (from the perspective of Bodonchar, on the lookout for subjects).

Here and elsewhere, particularly in the later chapters of *The Secret History* where references to *alginchin* are never just individual scouts but rather to scouting groups, sometimes large groups, the conception of the *alginchi* is connected with Mongol military tradition of a careful reconnoitering of any unknowns that might lie ahead. The *alginchin* also served the purpose not just of identifying opposition but also of drawing enemies toward a main force that could defeat an enemy directly or draw it still farther, in the classic feigned retreat for which steppe warriors were known, that led almost inevitably into an ambush or at least a long-range firefight in which superior Mongolian archery would take its toll.

Given the pace and intensity of steppe warfare and Mongol invasions of the outside world, it was natural and almost inevitable by the time of the late reign of Chinggis Khan, or particularly that of Ogodei Khan, that *alginchin* had long ceased to be individual scouts or small patrols and had become an important Mongol institution not just for spying out and testing enemies, as during the invasion of Eastern Europe described above, but for actually occupying conquests. But given the nature of the institution, this was not in the sense of a garrison but rather in that of a trip wire force that was intended, as was the case with the original *alginchin*, to discover opposition in a larger sense, not just of opposing armies but within a larger social context.

This was the case in 1217 or 1218 when Muqali was appointed to head a nomadic garrison force, or *tanma*, for occupied China. His *tanma* was a virtual branch confederation of the Mongol Empire as a whole, including families and dependents. It initially had around 23,000 warriors in all, consisting of 4,000 Ur’ud, 2,000 Ikires, 1,000 Manghud, 3,000 Onggirad, and 2,000 Jalayir along with allies such as the forces provided by the Onggud, from Inner Mongolia, and those of various Khitan, Jurchen, Tangut, and Chinese warlords. There were also 1,000 assorted troops, and these must have been the origin of the small scouting groups noted by a Chinese source as scattered across occupied China like stars. These must have been *alginchin*, and *The Secret History* in recording events of Ogodei’s reign does make specific reference to the establishment of *alginchi* forces in the conquered territories.

Their theaters clearly did not include just China, since there were *tanma* forces established for various other parts of the Mongol world. This included Iran, where Chormaqan-qorci fulfilled much the same role as Muqali and his descendants in China. In Iran, the “n” disappears and there is reference to *tamma* instead of *tanma*, but the institution is the same. The term *alginchi* does not occur in the Western sources or for that matter the Chinese sources, but *The Secret History* clearly suggests a general establishment of *alginchi* to guard over the “people of the cities” in the entire Mongol Empire, and this must have included places in the West such as Iran and Khorasan.

Tamma are mentioned several times, but only Het’um the Monk (d. 1310) refers to *tammachi* (*camachy*) in his *La flor des estoires de la terre d’Orient* (The Flower of Histories of the Land of the East), composed in 1307 in Old French for a European audience.

MANGLAI AND GEJIGE

Terms related to *alginchi*, for larger forces, were *manglai* (lit. “forehead”), an advanced vanguard force, larger and more substantial than any group of *alginchi*, and *gejige* (follow up), a main force but one only to be committed when the scouts or vanguard had discovered something or lured enemies into an ambush. How far this system could be applied can be seen from the Mongolian invasion of Eastern Europe in 1241. Not only did Subedei, the tactical genius in charge of the operation, invade with multiple armies, advancing along different routes, some at considerable distance from the others, to confuse the enemies, but he also carefully manipulated loosely connected components of his forces. In this case the goal was Hungary, but European and Hungarian opponents did not know that until it was too late, and even in Hungary the Mongols came together as a connected force only at the last minute (nearly too late in the battle for a river bridge). The important thing was that not only were there multiple armies, but each army was clearly divided into various closely coordinated forces, including, apparently, groups of *alginchi*, perhaps consisting of 100 or more warriors. In Poland, for example, where conditions were favorable, such groups did considerable damage to their opponents.

When one reads Het’um carefully, his *tammachi* are more than members of a main garrison force and also include advanced units, in Seljuk domains, for example.

The confusion between *tammachi* proper and *alginchi* and the lumping of the two is not unique to Het’um. Later Chinese sources are confused as well, but it is abundantly clear that their *tammachin* consisted of two distinct groups, the descendants of Muqali’s main force and the descendants of the *alginchi* groups separate from this main force. In fact, most of those forces mentioned in later sources as *tammachin* are actually *alginchin*, although their original function seems long forgotten.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Muqali; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Ogo-dei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; Onggirad; Onggud; Tangut; *Key Events:* Europe, Invasion of; *Military:* Chormaqan Noyan; Subedei; *Tamma; Objects and Artifacts:* *The Secret History of the Mongols*

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Ankara, Battle of (1402)

The Battle of Ankara was a massive defeat for the fledgling Ottoman Empire at the hands of the Turko-Mongo Timur (known in the West as Tamerlane) on July 20, 1402. At the time it seemed like a crushing and likely crippling defeat for the Ottoman Empire, which had until then enjoyed a meteoric rise under such talented and energetic leaders as Bayezid I, the Ottoman leader defeated and captured by Timur at Ankara. In fact, however, it was just over 50 years after the defeat that the Ottomans captured Constantinople and emerged as one of the world's preeminent imperial powers.

It was the dramatic accumulation of Ottoman power that, in a number of ways, brought about the confrontation between Bayezid and Timur in 1402. The Mongol khan had recently waged successful campaigns in Russia, Syria, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Iraq and smashed the armies of the Mamluks in Egypt. Through all of this, the rising power of the Ottomans was a threat on his western flank, and he was resolved to cripple the young empire to secure his now massive territorial holdings. Timur was encouraged in this by local Turkish princes whose local autonomy was severely curtailed by the centralizing tendencies of the Ottomans, even though those tendencies would not fully develop for some time.

The battle itself was precipitated by the seizure by Bayezid of some territories and allies of Timur. Bayezid was also harboring some of Timur's enemies. Timur entered Asia Minor and marched west. When the governor of Ankara refused to surrender the city to him, he began fortifying a camp outside the city and waited for the Ottomans to arrive. Bayezid came with a splendidly disciplined army, but Timur, his generals, and his engineers had been busy as they awaited the Ottoman army; and their preparations for battle and the strategy they developed would prove decisive.

As the Mongols surveyed the topography of the area in which the battle would take place, Timur (or one of his staff) noticed something—there was a very limited water supply in the area, which was otherwise very arid. Timur's forces saw that they could deprive the Ottomans of water by blocking a nearby creek upstream from where the fighting would take place.

It was July, and the battlefield was hot and dusty. Combat, of course, is hard work. At the Battle of Ankara, it was made all the harder for the Ottoman troops because Timur's soldiers were fighting from well-fortified positions. The fighting went on all day, but in the end the Ottomans, like any soldiers, could not fight while dehydrated, and their army was crushed. Bayezid was captured and died in prison the following year, but his son, Mehmet I, almost immediately began the business of reforging his father's vast empire.

Tom Sizgorich

See also: *Individuals:* Timur-i Leng

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Armor

For the Mongols, armor consisted of protective materials worn by warriors and made from leather, metal, or a combination of materials. Although the Mongols were primarily light cavalry, this did not prevent them from donning armor. When the Mongols wore armor they preferred lamellar armor, as it provided better protection than chain mail against arrows. Lamellar armor had overlapping rectangles of hardened leather or pieces of metal that were fastened together with thongs. The overlapping provided more protection, and the thongs absorbed some of the impact from blows. Typically the armor overlapped the bottom of the row above it. This provided more protection against attacks from men on foot by providing layers. At the same time, it was not uncommon for it to overlap at the top instead. The backs of the Mongols were often unarmored or had less protection, although some suits of armor provided excellent protection for the back as well. Lamellar generally consisted of a breastplate and a skirt that came down just below the knees. The skirt was slit to allow the Mongol warrior to mount his horse and ride easily. The left armpit was exposed when the arm was raised to fire the bow. In addition to its protection from arrows, Mongols preferred lamellar armor for its simplicity of manufacture and repair. It is also quite possible that the Mongols did not have the means, or the desire, to create mail armor if lamellar armor was effective.

Although chain mail is often considered the armor of choice when one thinks of the 13th century, it was one of several types of armor. It was, of course, popular in Europe and the Middle East, but it remained expensive to buy or manufacture, as interlocking rings had to be riveted together by a blacksmith. It is not known whether or not the Mongols manufactured it, but as chain mail existed in the sedentary realms invaded or conquered by the Mongols, they could have easily acquired it from the battlefield or during raids. It is notable that the Franciscan monk John of Plano Carpini, a spy for Pope Innocent IV, recommended that European knights wear two layers of chain mail, as a single layer would not protect them from Mongol arrows. In the 14th century chain mail became more frequent among the Mongols particularly among the elites, indicating that they produced it. For them, it served not only as body armor but also as a display of wealth.

The Mongols did not always wear armor. Many simply wore the traditional *deel* or *degel*, a knee-length coat that fastened on one side. In addition to the *degel*, the Mongols carried treated coats to protect them from the rain as well as felt coats to combat the cold. These were carried with them even during the summer. In some cases, pieces of leather or metal were simply sewn onto the Mongols' *deel*. It has been suggested that this latter influenced the development of the West European brigandine jacket that became popular in the 14th century.



While the Mongols were primarily light cavalry, they also wore armor, such as *lamellar*, depicted in this Persian miniature from the *Compendium of Chronicles*, by Rashid al-Din, 14th century. Lamellar armor was made from overlapping pieces of leather or metal. (University of Edinburgh/Bridgeman Images)

Another form of armor was boiled leather, which when dried also provided adequate protection against swords and arrows. The boiling process made the leather malleable so that it could be shaped easier during production. While some sources mention it, such as John of Plano Carpini and Marco Polo, it appears less commonly than lamellar armor in the archaeological evidence.

In regard to helmets, the Mongols wore ones of simple construction. In shape they were similar to an upside-down acorn. On the sides, slots existed where flaps could be attached to better protect their ears and neck. The helmets, in general, were constructed of bronze or iron. At times these were often of an iron framework with a bronze skin.

One common myth is that the Mongols wore silk shirts underneath their armor. This not only served as one more layer of protection but also prevented further damage, as the silk threads wound around arrowheads, thus making it easier to extract the arrow from wounds. This, however, is speculation. Such use is not mentioned in any Chinese, Latin, Arabic, Persian, Mongolian, or other primary source from the era. There is some mention that the Mongols wore silk shirts, but considering the amount of silk that was extracted as plunder, then tribute, and finally as taxes, it is not

surprising that some Mongols may have worn silk shirts. Against the bare skin, it must have felt much better than felt, which is made from wool.

Timothy May

See also: *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; *Key Events:* John of Plano Carpini, Journey of; *Military:* Weapons; *Primary Documents:* Document 13

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Ayn Jalut, Battle of (1260)

Fought in Palestine in 1260, the Battle of Ayn Jalut was a Mamluk victory over the Mongols. After the Mongols conquered Syria, Mongol envoys arrived in Egypt demanding the submission of the Mamluks. Qutuz, the Mamluk leader at the time, responded by decapitating the Mongol envoys. Rather than waiting for the Mongols to invade Egypt, the Mamluks invaded Syria, defeating a force at Gaza. In addition to the Mongol threat, Qutuz worried about the crusader states in the region. Qutuz was aware that not all of the Franks, as the Muslims called the European crusaders, were favorable to the Mongols, and there had been calls for a crusade against the Mongols. Although Antioch was a vassal of the Mongols, many of the barons of the Kingdom of Jerusalem were opposed to the idea of an alliance with the Mongols. The only options open to the Franks were to submit to the Mongols or to play their natural enemies off each other. Furthermore, the Mongols, based on their invasion of Europe, were clearly the more imminent threat. If the Mongols defeated the Mamluks, they were likely to capture all of the Latin East, as the crusading states were known. Thus, when Qutuz took Gaza he was soon met by envoys from the Franks, who promised that they would be neutral in the coming fight.

The coming struggle for control over Syria took place at Ayn Jalut, or the Springs of Goliath, in the Jezreel Valley on September 3, 1260. The Mamluks met the Mongols on equal terms. Although the Mongols could defeat larger armies, such as at Liegnitz in 1241, where they defeated a combined European army of Germans and Poles, the Mongol forces in Syria numbered around 20,000. One *tumen*, commanded by Ket Buqa, was a diverse force of Turks and Mongols. Another was recruited from the local population. The reliability of this Syria *tumen* was questionable. They were adequate for garrison

duty. As long as the Mongols were not challenged, their loyalty was not in doubt, as Syrian forces had been decisively crushed during the initial invasion. Nonetheless, they could still be a threat if they joined an enemy. Thus, when Ket Buqa marched to Ayn Jalut he took only a small contingent of the auxiliary *tumen* with him in fear of treachery.

The battle itself was not one of great tactical maneuvering. Baybars, the Mamluk who led the vanguard, lured the Mongols into an ambush. The Mongols attacked Baybars's smaller force, which retreated into the hills. From the hills, the rest of the Mamluk army poured out and engaged the Mongols. The Mamluks were aided by treachery, as the local troops from Hims switched sides.

The Mamluks had the advantage over the Mongols due to information given by the traitor Sarim. The Mongol right wing faced a strengthened Mamluk left wing. The importance of this is not clear, as the armies were of almost equal strength; therefore, the other flank would have to be weakened to strengthen the left. When the Mongols' Syrian troops abandoned the field, they were positioned on the Mongol left wing. The Mamluk flanks steadily swept in, crushing the Mongol center in a pincer. The battle was not an easy victory, though the Mongols shattered one wing of the Mamluk army and had the Mamluks on the verge of retreat when Qutuz rallied his forces. Scholars believe that the Syrian troops may have abandoned the Mongols at this point. The sources are not clear except that the Mongols took the initiative at the onset. The Mamluks emerged victorious with their second effort.

The Mongols had lost battles before but always avenged their losses. Not long after Ayn Jalut, the Mongols attempted to reestablish their dominion over Syria. In December 1260, a large force of Mongols invaded Syria near Aleppo. The Aleppan army retreated south to avoid the Mongols and seek aid. After raiding Aleppo, the Mongols pursued them. At Hims, the Mongol army of approximately 6,000 encountered an army of approximately 1,500 troops from Aleppo, Hamah, and Hims. Despite a decisive numerical advantage, the Syrian forces defeated the Mongols on December 11, 1260. This battle was extremely significant, as local forces, not the elite Mamluks of Egypt, had defeated a larger Mongol army. This battle, perhaps even more than Ayn Jalut, demonstrated that the Mongols could be defeated.

The Battle of Ayn Jalut was won not because of superior numbers but instead due to other factors. The Mamluks took advantage of the terrain, hiding their troops in the hills that surrounded the valley so the Mongols could not estimate their strength. Furthermore, the Mamluks positioned themselves so that the Mongols faced the sun in the morning, thus hampering the Mongol view of the Mamluks proceeding down out of the hills. This may have also affected the Mongols' ability to fire their arrows, as the sun impaired their aim.

The Mongols, on the other hand, failed to acquire proper intelligence of the Mamluk military capabilities and left an inadequate force in the region due to the lack of pasture. Thus, they had to rely on untrustworthy and recently conquered Syrian troops. They also failed to destroy the crusaders who played a wild card in the region. The Battle of Ayn Jalut decided who the dominant power in Syria was to be. The events that occurred after the battle ultimately decided the fate of Syria and Palestine, but the Mamluk

victory at Ayn Jalut was the pivotal factor because it showed that the Mongols could be defeated. This encouraged rebellion, and soon the Mongols were driven out of Syria. The victory at Ayn Jalut also gave confidence to the local amirs. As demonstrated at Hims in 1260, the amirs discovered that they could defend themselves without the aid of the Mamluks of Egypt. The Mamluks, however, quickly used their victory to raise their prestige and legitimacy, trumping the victory at Hims.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Baybars I; *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks; *Key Events:* Crusades against the Mongols; Europe, Invasion of; *Military:* Liegnitz, Battle of; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 1; Document 2

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Baghdad, Siege of (1258)

Hulegu’s attack on Baghdad in 1258 ended the Abbasid Caliphate. Although Mongols raided the caliphate, centered in Baghdad, since the 1230s, Baghdad remained defiant of the Mongols. Its sizable army and strong city defenses gave Caliph al-Mustansir confidence against the Mongol threat. Unfortunately for the Abbasid Caliphate, he died in 1242 after ruling for 17 years. With the ascension of his son, Mustasim ibn Mustansir, in 1242, Baghdad’s fortunes fell. Unlike his father, Mustasim did not take the Mongol threat seriously. Instead, he focused on personal amusements such as games and pigeon racing.

Mustasim reduced the military’s pay and generally ignored his job of ruling. This permitted religious strife between Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims to erupt in 1258. Realizing Mustasim’s incompetence, his Shia *wazir* (minister), Ibn Alqami, who ran the day-to-day affairs of the government, plotted to overthrow the caliph. Ibn Alqami continued to disband military units, arguing that this would lead to peace with the Mongols. Caliph Mustasim, preoccupied with a life of indulgence, remained oblivious of his actions and failed to realize that the Mongols planned to attack Baghdad even when messages between Alqami and the Mongols were intercepted. Thus, Baghdad remained unprepared for the coming onslaught.

In 1257, Hulegu marched from Persia (modern-day Iran) toward Baghdad. Before launching his attack on Baghdad, Hulegu asked an astrologer when he should attack



When the Mongols sacked Baghdad, they effectively ended the Abbasid Caliphate. This Persian miniature depicts the Mongols under Hulegu crossing the Tigris River to attack Baghdad in 1258 CE. This illumination is found in the *Jami al-Tawarikh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*) by Rashid al-Din, 14th century. (DeAgostini/Getty Images)

the city. The astrologer informed Hulegu that attacking would cause a series of catastrophes to befall the Mongols, including that all of their horses would die, the soldiers would sicken, the sun would not rise, and drought would occur, followed by cold destructive winds and earthquakes. Naturally this meant that plants would cease to grow and all would turn into desert. Finally, a great ruler would die within a year. Meanwhile, all of the Mongol generals advised Hulegu to invade. To resolve the issue, Hulegu referred to Nasir al-Din Tusi, a scholar and adviser. Nasir al-Din Tusi told Hulegu to proceed with the invasion, as caliphs had been killed before without any ill effects.

When Hulegu reached the border, he gathered his vassals, including Muslim rulers such as Badr-al-Din-i Lu'lu' of Mosul and the Atabak Abu Biktur ibn Sa'd of Fars. Meanwhile, the commander of his vanguard, Ket Buqa, captured the surrounding areas by December 1257. Then in 1258 Hulegu marched on Baghdad with an army that included Georgians, Armenians, and the garrison of Mosul. As the Mongols advanced, the Abbasid military leaders, Sulaiman Shah and Malik Izz al-Din ibn Fath al-Din, urged Mustasim to take action, but he left the preparations in the hands of the Alqami, who did nothing.

As Hulegu approached the city from the east, Baiju, a Mongol general, moved toward Baghdad from the northwest. The prefect of the Abbasid palace, Rukn al-Din,

intercepted the vanguard of Baiju near the city of Tikrit. Initially Rukn al-Din forced the Mongols back, but Baiju arrived and secured a Mongol victory.

Baiju's army, which included Armenians and Georgians, crossed the Tigris River by constructing a boat bridge. Their crossing was delayed when Abbasid troops from Tikrit burned part of it. Baiju rebuilt the bridge and then proceeded to capture the strongholds of Kufa, Hillah, and Karkh.

The Abbasid commanders Malik Izz al-Din and Mujahid al-Din led a sizable army across the Tigris River against Hulegu. The Mongols initiated the attack, but the Muslims defeated them. Izz al-Din wanted to pursue, but Mujahid al-Din held back, concerned that it was a trick for an ambush. As a result, the Abbasid forces made camp for the night. At this time, Alqami's agents sabotaged dikes and flooded their camp. With several drowned and their camp in disarray, the Abbasid army was slaughtered when the Mongols returned at dawn.

With the Abbasid field armies defeated, the armies of Baiju and Ket Buqa surrounded the city beginning on January 22, 1258. Hulegu arrived a few days later. Leading citizens of Baghdad attempted to open negotiations to surrender, but Hulegu simply kept the envoys in his camp and continued the siege. Although the Mongols surrounded the city, they focused their efforts on a single tower. While the siege engines pounded the walls, Hulegu conducted negotiations to undermine the resistance of the city. In return for the city's surrender, he offered to spare the clergy and noncombatants. Before the city surrendered, however, the Mongols pierced the walls on February 1, 1258. The defenders held them off the rest of the day, but on February 2 the Mongols broke through, and the city fell.

Rather than fleeing the city, Caliph Mustasim was convinced by Ibn Alqami to remain and negotiate peace terms with the Mongols. Hulegu's terms consisted of taking Mustasim's daughter as a wife and the caliph becoming a vassal. If these were accepted, the attack would cease. The caliph and local notables accepted the treaty and exited the city. The remaining army of Baghdad was divided and massacred, and then Hulegu executed most of the notables and eventually ordered the execution of the caliph by having him trampled after rolling him in a carpet, after berating him for hoarding his wealth rather than spending it on the defense of Baghdad. Although Hulegu carried out negotiations, these were a trap—in the minds of the Mongols, once fighting began, negotiations were over.

Hulegu gave his consent for a general pillaging of the town, which lasted 34 days beginning on February 13, 1258. Each general received a quarter of the city to plunder. Some sections, such as those of the Nestorian Christians, received less damage. Ibn Alqami's service to the Mongols did not go unnoticed, however. When Hulegu asked him what was the source of his former prosperity, Alqami replied that it was the caliph. Hulegu ordered his execution, telling him that as he did not appreciate the caliph, he was not worthy of serving the Mongol prince.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Baiju; *Individuals:* Hulegu; Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Nestorian Christians; *Key Places:*

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Caizhou, Siege of (1233–1234)

The siege of Caizhou, the last major action of the Mongol-Jin War (1211–1234), ended the Jin dynasty. Although the Jin capital of Kaifeng fell in 1233 to the great Mongol general Subedei, the final end of the Jin Empire came at the hands of a lesser-known general named Tachar.

Knowing that the Mongols would lay siege to Kaifeng, the Jin emperor, Aizong, decided to move to a more distant location, choosing Caizhou. Realizing that Caizhou was not the most defensible location, the supreme commander of the Jin Army, a Khitan named Guannu, urged the emperor to go to Suiyang. The emperor, however, perceived this as a slight to his abilities and ordered the execution of Guannu. When another commander, Puxian, arrived at Caizhou and found the city's defenses lacking, it was too late to go elsewhere. Nonetheless, the move extended the life of the Jin Empire for a few months after Kaifeng's fall.

Tachar Noyan approached Caizhou in late October 1233 in the *nerge* fashion, taking other cities and isolating Caizhou. Jin reinforcements fought a running battle to reach the city. Meanwhile, many commanders withheld their troops to protect their own holdings. Mongol forces continued to operate in many columns, forcing the Jin to react to their attacks and preventing them from consolidating their efforts against the Mongols.

As the Mongols arrived, food hoarding and inflation ran rampant within the city. The civilian population was not alone in its reaction, as members of the Jin Imperial Guard deserted to the Mongols shortly after the attack began on November 19, 1233. As the siege continued, the situation in Caizhou grew desperate. By December food prices in Caizhou reached astronomical figures, and cannibalism resulted. Even hanging the culprits failed to end cannibalism. Although food for the general population was scarce, the emperor still ate well, as sorties were made to catch fresh fish for the emperor. However, in November even the emperor felt hunger pangs as Tachar ambushed the fishing squad.

Another sign of desperation appeared as one faction among the Jurchen developed plans to have their soldiers drink a magic potion to protect them; another plan involved equipping their horses with lion masks and big bells on their necks to frighten the Mongol horses. Even the emperor saw the folly of this plan and dismissed it. Caizhou's situation worsened as the Song joined the Mongols in the siege with 10,000 men.

As 1234 approached, the city had high hopes for relief, as the emperor had sent messengers to all towns and forts still held by the Jin. He requested that they come in a coordinated attack on the New Year (Chinese New Year, not January 1); however, no one came. Although the Mongols intercepted some of the messages, many still reached their destination. The Jin commanders realized that rescuing Caizhou was a doomed effort. Many of the commanders preferred to sit and wait and then submit to the Mongols for favorable terms. As the Mongols abhorred disloyalty, to desert the emperor at a crucial moment could result in execution by the Mongols, but if they submitted after the fall of Caizhou, they would be received favorably.

On January 8, 1234, the Mongols burst the embankment of the Lian River in conjunction with Song efforts to flood the Ju River, which protected the western and southern approaches to Caizhou. The flooding allowed the Mongols to penetrate the western edge of the city on January 20, 1234. To preserve their gains from counterattacks, the Mongols erected a palisade. Tachar Noyan did not rush his attack in pursuit of glory and instead first secured his position to ensure victory. The Jin continued to resist, slaughtering their horses for rations and destroying civilian houses to build inner defensive works. In a last-ditch effort, the emperor sent the court eunuchs and courtiers to man the walls. These last reinforcements did little to stem the Mongol tide. Sensing the end, Emperor Aizong abdicated to Modi on February 8, 1234. The following day, the city of Caizhou fell to the Mongols. Thus, the Jin Empire ceased to exist after 20 years of warfare between the Mongols and the Jin dynasty. Oddly enough, Wa Kang, the Jurchen court astrologer, predicted that the Jin would win, although the siege would last until the 13th day of the following year. Unfortunately for the Jin, the prediction was not quite accurate, as the city fell on February 9, 1234, or the 10th of the 1st month of the next year according to the Chinese lunar calendar. The Mongols, however, departed on the 13th day.

The siege of Caizhou is a vivid example not only of the fall of a city but also of the last struggles of a proud dynasty. The Mongols had been at war with the Jin for over 20 years. Although other campaigns often diverted the Mongols' attention from the Jin, the fact that the Jin resisted for so long demonstrates their efforts and fortitude. The siege also reveals the depth of ability among the Mongol commanders. Subedei, the leading Mongol general at the time, initiated the destruction of the Jin dynasty, but prior to the coup de grace, he was reassigned to lead the campaign in the west against the Kipchaks and the Rus' and on into Europe. The fact that Ogodei Khan switched commanders in the midst of a war demonstrates the confidence that the Mongols had in their generals.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Ogodei Khan; *Key Events:* Jin Empire, Fall of the; *Military:* Siege Warfare; Subedei; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Song Empire

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Cannon

The first actual firearm—that is, a weapon using gunpowder to shoot a projectile—appeared in the first half of the 13th century; it had a short barrel 6.9 inches in length and 1 inch in diameter. It is believed to have been used in 1288 in a battle during the reign of Khubilai Khan, approximately 40 years prior to the appearance of firearms in Europe. Actual cannons, often made from cast iron, did not appear in large quantities until the 1300s. There is some evidence, however, that cannons were produced slightly before 1300. In 2004, a bronze cannon was found in China. An inscription on the cannon in Phags-pa script indicated that it was made in 1298. It appears to have been more of an antipersonnel weapon, though, weighing in at 13 pounds 11 ounces (6.2 kilograms) and measuring only about 14 inches (34.7 centimeters) long. Although some scholars have argued for dates much earlier than this (early 13th century), those dates cannot be substantiated. Nonetheless, although primitive, unwieldy, and unreliable, these weapons were produced in large quantities for use against fortresses in China by the Mongols and the nascent Ming dynasty.

Generally speaking, most of the firearms and cannons took a long time to load and were not very accurate, thus often rendering them rather ineffective. The fact that soldiers could become adept in their use quickly, however, allowed large numbers of firearms to overcome some of their deficiencies. Although it is certain that the Mongol armies used cannons and firearms in general, their distribution and extent of use are not clear. The weapon dated to 1288 was found in Manchuria, a region where Khubilai Khan faced rebellion, yet we do not know how the weapon was implemented.

Gunpowder was known in Europe, mentioned in the writings of Roger Bacon in 1267. Cannons do not appear until the 1320s, and they bear a remarkable resemblance to those used in the Yuan Empire. Meanwhile, in Western Europe, European kings were virtually the only nobility who could afford the expense of making cannons, thus allowing them to increase their power and authority. As European fortifications improved against traditional siege weapons, rulers became dependent on cannons to smash castles to defeat their enemies and bring recalcitrant vassals in line. West European armies fought steppe nomads less regularly as well. Thus, mobility was not an issue to knights, who had to increase their armor to protect them against crossbows, longbows, and early firearms. As a result, the knight became less mobile. Early cannons and firearms, however, could be effective against the knights and infantry in a way they could



Actual cannons appeared in China during the Yuan Dynasty (1260–1368). In this illustration the Mongol army attacks a Chinese fortress, from a 16th-century edition of the 14th-century work *The History of the Mongols*. (Werner Forman/Universal Images Group/Getty Images)

not be against the steppe nomads. Of course, the knight gradually disappeared, while light and medium cavalry appeared to counter the artillery.

A similar effect occurred in China. In China, cannons were used extensively by the Ming dynasty, which drove the Mongols out in 1368. Cannons, however, played a small role in defeating the Mongols, as the Yuan armies also utilized them extensively. Indeed, the Ming's use of cannons was limited to siege warfare and battles in southern China, where the terrain could restrict maneuverability, although apparently 38 varieties of firearms existed and for a wide range of purposes. The Ming did not use firearms extensively on their northern frontier with the Mongolian tribes, as their mobility prevented them from being targeted. At most cannon fire could only disrupt their formations in a field battle, and by the time the Ming determined the range, the nomads had moved on. Indeed, Ming use of cannons and other firearms appears to have been similar to that of the Yuan.

How the Yuan and Ming used cannons had great ramifications, as it demonstrated a pattern. Countries sharing borders with steppe nomads had less development in gunpowder weaponry until their prime military focus shifted to sedentary states. Only then did the technology improve. Toward the end of the 17th century field artillery pieces became more mobile, thus providing support for musket-wielding infantry. The cannons easily disrupted steppe cavalry formations and possessed a greater range than the composite bow. Only then did steppe warfare decline as the dominant form of warfare. Yet it should be noted that only one state formed a truly effective method of dealing with horse archers prior to the 1600s: the Ottomans. This may have been because of their need to deal not only with the strongly fortified cities of the Habsburgs in Europe but also with the horse archers of the various powers on their eastern border, ranging from the Aq Qoyunlus and the

Safavids (defeated at Chaldiran in 1514) to the Mamluk Sultanate (conquered in 1516 in Syria and in 1517 in Egypt).

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Military:* Gunpowder; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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Chakirmaut, Battle of (1204)

The Battle of Chakirmaut, the most important battle that Chinggis Khan fought in 1204, secured his domination of Mongolia. At Chakirmaut, also known as Naqu Cliffs, on the slopes of the Khangai Mountains, Chinggis Khan unveiled new tactics and formations that not only bewildered his opponents but also elevated the Mongol art of war to a new level. After Ong Khan’s death, the Naiman, with good reason, believed that they were the dominant power in the Mongolian steppes and viewed the Mongols, who now controlled central and eastern Mongolia, as a threat but also as upstarts who needed to be taught a lesson.

Although a preeminent power, the Naiman under Tayang Khan also attempted to rally other tribes against the Mongols. This was also an effort by the Naiman to assert their dominance over weaker tribes. One such tribe was the Onggud, led by Alaqush, located in the modern-day Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in China. Alaqush successfully extricated himself from any commitment to the Naiman and warned Chinggis Khan of the impending Naiman attack in 1204.

In mid-May 1204 Chinggis Khan’s army marched against the Naiman. Although the Mongol horses were extremely lean, as winter had not ended, the Mongol army assembled and prepared to march westward. At this time, Chinggis Khan also took the initial steps in forming his *keshek* (bodyguard). Initially this *keshek* consisted of 150 day and night guards as well as a *mingan* (unit of 1,000), led by Arqai-Qasar, that accompanied him into battle. This was the beginning of not only a formalized army but also the institutions of the future empire. The failure of the Naiman to convince the Onggud to

join them also demonstrates a fundamental difference between the old tribal confederations and the new system that Chinggis Khan instituted. While the Naiman, a large and powerful confederation in its own right, attempted to increase their numbers by convincing other tribes to follow their leadership, Chinggis Khan, as he had against the Tayichiud, Tatars, and Kereit, incorporated the defeated into his own ranks after eliminating the enemy. In this manner his following increased, but the leadership of his tribe came from those he appointed, not from traditional tribal leaders as would occur in a confederation.

A vanguard led by Jebe and Khubilai, a general and not Chinggis Khan's grandson, encountered the Naiman on the Sa'ari steppe. Jebe and Khubilai confused the Naiman by lighting numerous campfires at night and convincing the Naiman that they actually had a considerable force with them. Tayang Khan, realizing the weakened position of the Mongols' horses, desired to lure them into the Altai Mountains, where they could then ambush them as the Mongols continued to exhaust their horses, as the Altai were about 310 miles (500 kilometers) away. This was a sound and traditional strategy, but there were divisions in the Naiman ranks. Tayang Khan's son, Guchulug, and others insisted on attacking; their desires won the day, and the Naiman took the offensive. Nonetheless, the Mongols defeated the Naiman. Tayang Khan fled but was captured at Naqu Cliffs in 1204. Guchulug established a fortified camp that resisted Mongol attacks for a brief time before he was forced to flee again. All of the Naiman who survived the onslaught were incorporated into the Mongols. Furthermore, a number of Mongol tribes who had accompanied Jamuqa also submitted to Chinggis Khan. These included the Jadaran, Qatagin, Salji'ut, and Dorben and the remaining Tayichiud and Onggirad as well as others.

The victory marked a milestone in the development of the Mongol army. The Mongols not only used tactics of subterfuge in lighting extra campfires, but this battle is the first mention of specific formations. During the battle, Chinggis Khan ordered the army to march in *qaraghana* (close or bush) formation and then to form in *nur* (lake) formation, a loose formation extending over a wide area. Once the attack began, Chinggis Khan ordered them to engage the enemy in *shi'uche* (chisel) fashion.

With the victory over the Naiman, by 1205 Temujin controlled the Mongolian plateau, although the Naiman and Merkit continued to linger on the fringes of Mongolia. In addition, despite some voluntary submissions to Chinggis Khan, many of the northern Forest People remained outside of Chinggis Khan's control. Despite this, the Mongols found it necessary to complete their destruction of the Naiman and their longtime foes, the Merkit, in 1206 in the Altai Mountains. In a battle near the Ulagh Tagh, the Naiman and Merkit were defeated. Factions led by Guchulug of the Naiman and Toqtoa of the Merkit fled farther west to the Irtysh River. Meanwhile, Jamuqa fled northwest into Tannu Tuva near the Yenesei River.

The Secret History of the Mongols does not mention any operations against the Naiman in 1206; however, Rashid al-Din recorded a campaign against Buyiruc Khan. It appears that Buyiruc Khan emerged as the leading figure among the Naiman after the battle in 1204. In Rajab in 1206 shortly after Temujin ascended the Mongol throne as Chinggis Khan, he launched an attack against Buyiruc. Chinggis Khan successfully

defeated and killed him and thus incorporated Buyirug's *nuntuq* into his own. In a curious twist, Rashid al-Din also wrote that in this battle Guchulug escaped and fled to the Irtysh River along with Toqtoa Beki of the Merkit. It is not clear if this battle that Rashid al-Din described conflated events from 1204, 1206, and 1208 or if it actually took place.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration: Keshik; Groups and Organizations: Merkit; Naiman; Onggirad; Onggud; Military: Decimal Organization; Irtysh River, Battle of the; Tactics*

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Cherik

Although horse archers recruited from the nomadic population of the empire were the primary fighting force of the Mongols, the Mongols also recruited nonnomadic troops who were typically called *cherik* (a Mongolian term meaning “soldier”) troops.

The *cherik* troops were the sedentary counterpart of the Mongol *tamma* troops. During the conquest of the Jin Empire, the Mongols created new armies based on Han Chinese conscripts as well as deserters from the Jin Army. Even in the initial stages, these *cherik* units played an important role in the conquest. Against the Jin Empire, Chinggis Khan returned north in 1214, and the former Jin general Liu Bolin garrisoned Tiancheng with Han troops and held it against Jin attacks. Liu Bolin also built up a force and took Xijing in 1215, and in 1216 he became the commander of the first official Han *cheriks*. In 1217/1218 when Muqali received command of the *tamma* troops stationed in northern China while Chinggis Khan returned to Mongolia, Muqali also received three *cherik* units. Khitan generals commanded them: Uyar, Yelu Tuhua, and Chalaer. Uyar commanded Khitan, Chalaer commanded primarily *juyin* troops from the Zhongdu area, and Yelu Tuhua commanded an army consisting primarily of Han troops. The Han *cheriks* became increasingly subdivided due to size, as the unit kept increasing as more deserted from the Jin Empire. The Mongols also conscripted more as they conquered territory.

Initially, these were simply units of individual commanders who had deserted to the Mongols; as the conquest of the Jin Empire continued, the Han armies were organized decimally. Ogodei then divided them into three *tumed*, totaling 36 units of 1,000. These were then commanded by former Jin generals: the Khitan Xiao Chala and two Han commanders named Liu Ni and Shi Tianze. By 1234, three more *tumed* (and perhaps more) were commanded by Chung Jou, Yen Shi, and Chang Jung. Prior to 1235, these Han units were known as the Hei Jun (Black Army). With the defeat of the Jin, the Mongols were then able to conduct a census in 1236 and then again in 1241. With the data derived from the census, the Mongols conscripted additional units in those years as well. As a result, the Mongols increased the number of Han troops dramatically. Ninety-five thousand new Han troops entered the Mongol army and formed the Xin Jun (New Army), which was primarily infantry.

As with the regular Mongol army, many of the commanding positions in the Hei Jun and Xin Jun became inheritable. This privilege, however, became greatly reduced in 1262 after the rebellion of Li Tan in eastern Shandong. Li Tan entered Mongol service during Mongke's invasion of the Song Empire and earned the respect of Mongke. During the war between Khubilai and Ariq Boke, Li Tan asserted his independence and even joined the Song Empire, massacring Mongol troops in his domains. Khubilai, occupied with the war in Mongolia against Ariq Boke, mobilized Han *cherik* forces to crush the rebellion, which they did swiftly. Afterward, though, Khubilai became leery of the Han generals, so he reduced the power of native officers. The Mongols reduced the number of relatives of existing Han officers serving in the military and attached members of the *keshik* to military units to co-command and supervise them.

While the *cherik* forces, like the *tamma* forces, were positioned along the borders of the empire, non-*cherik* forces also existed and were stationed differently. In part this was because they were modeled like the Mongol army, or *Menggu jun*. Thus, there existed armies based solely on nationalities such as the *Khidan jun* (Khitan Army) and the *Nuzhi jun* (Jurchen Army).

As the Mongols expanded westward, sedentary western peoples such as the Rus', Volga Bulgars, Persians, and Kurds, among others, were also incorporated into the *cherik* army. As the Mongols utilized Jurchen and Khitan for heavy cavalry, the Volga Bulgars also served as heavy cavalry. Nomadic elements were brought directly into the Mongol army. The Mongols, however, did not force others into their own particular mode of fighting. Realizing that not all were fit for service as horse archers, the Mongols allowed other groups to fight in their own particular mode and adopted their tactics. In this manner, the Mongols had less need to fight in close combat and could now send in auxiliary troops for that purpose, who were often better equipped and more heavily armored for service as shock troops.

As the Mongols expanded, their application of the census, as has been discussed, enabled them to recruit and conscript their sedentary subjects into their military. While those with technical skills became part of the corps of engineers, others became members of the *cherik* or regular military forces. The regular forces typically remained as garrisons unless called upon by the Mongols for campaigns.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Khubilai Becomes Khan; *Organization and Administration:* Keshik; Muqali; *Individuals:* Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; *Juyin;* Khitan; *Military:* Decimal Organization; *Tamma;* *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Song Empire; Zhongdu

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Chormaqan Noyan (ca. 1200–1240)

The first Mongol governor-general in the Middle East, Chormaqan led Mongol armies across the Amu Darya River and into Khurasan and Iran in 1230 CE, conquering much of what would later comprise the Il-Khanate of Persia. Chinggis Khan (1165–1227) originally delivered the orders in 1221 during the war against the Khwarazmian Empire, but a rebellion delayed the campaign. Chormaqan served in this earlier campaign as a *qorchi* (quiver bearer) of Chinggis Khan's *keshik* (bodyguard). Ogodei, the successor of Chinggis Khan, renewed the command in 1229.

Chormaqan's orders were to expand the Mongol Empire and hunt down Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah (d. 1230–1231), the last sultan of the Khwarazmian Empire, who had returned from India. When Chormaqan's *tamma* of approximately 30,000 troops crossed the Amu Darya River, Jalal al-Din was in Transcaucasia—Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia. While a subordinate commander, Taimaz, pursued Jalal al-Din, Chormaqan efficiently secured the conquest of Iran through force and diplomacy. Another lieutenant, Dayir Noyan, meanwhile secured Khurasan and much of modern-day Afghanistan.

The Mongol force under Taimaz moved in the Mughan Plain in Azerbaijan and operated from its pastures. His forces relentlessly pursued Jalal al-Din and his army, never giving them an opportunity to rest. Even when the Khwarazmian troops thought they had escaped Mongol pursuit, the Mongols appeared. Indeed, Taimaz's final attack was a surprise attack launched when Jalal al-Din thought he had eluded the Mongols. Taimaz's operation failed to capture Jalal al-Din but dispersed his army throughout the region. Jalal al-Din became a refugee before eventually being murdered by Kurdish peasants in 1231.

While Taimaz pursued Jalal al-Din, Chormaqan led troops in Iran and took advantage of the absence of an effective military leader. While some resistance was met in northern Iran, Chormaqan's forces defeated all opposition quickly. Rather than risk invasion, the southern Iranian kingdoms such as Fars, Shiraz, and Kerman choose to submit and sent tribute. By 1232 Iran and Khurasan were firmly under Mongol control.

In 1234, Chormaqan turned his attention to the region of Transcaucasia, consisting of modern-day Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and parts of Turkey. After a five-year campaign, Chormaqan successfully conquered Transcaucasia. His forces had entered the region and disrupted much of it during the pursuit of Jalal al-Din. In 1231 Chormaqan also captured the city of Maraghah, which was the frontier of Transcaucasia and was situated on the shores of Lake Urmiya. Also in 1231, the Mongols occupied Tabriz, the future capital of the Il-Khanate, that submitted without a fight and paid tribute. Between 1231 and 1234 the Mongols consolidated their control over Iran and the Mughan Plain, which with its lush pastures became the Mongol headquarters for Chormaqan's *tanma*. The first major action came in 1234 as Chormaqan laid siege to the city of Gandzak. The siege carried into 1235 with a massacre of the population following the city's capture. Chormaqan's onslaught was so great that the city remained in ruins until 1239, when the Mongols ordered that the city be rebuilt and populated.

After the sack of Gandzak, Chormaqan then divided his army into several columns, which proceeded to march and devastated the cities of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan. No one ventured into an open battle with the Mongols, as they appeared like an irresistible force. Instead, the local nobles attempted to resist behind their fortifications, but to no avail. Curiously, no cities were captured until 1238, even though Mongol troops were active in the region. They did not make any effort to lay siege to the cities until 1238. This corresponds with the Mongol conquest of the Rus' principalities. Apparently, Chormaqan's push into Transcaucasia was coordinated with some degree with Subedei and Batu's campaign against the Kipchaks and Rus'.

Once Chormaqan's campaign of conquest began, however, the cities succumbed quickly. While massacres did take place, Chormaqan also was quite lenient to many Armenian princes who impressed him with their valor. Even though the Mongols usually gave one opportunity for a city to surrender (at the beginning of a siege), if a prince resisted valiantly, Chormaqan often opened a new line of communication and honored his agreement to spare the population. By 1239 the conquest of the entire region was completed, and the Mongols returned to the Mughan Plain after they razed all fortifications in the region.

Chormaqan's rule in the region is viewed favorably in the sources. His respect for and favorable treatment of the Armenian and Georgia nobility transformed them into dependable allies. At the same time, fear of Chormaqan's army also kept them in line, as they were aware of the consequences of betrayal and rebellion. Chormaqan did not interfere with the practice of their religion and does not appear to have been too onerous in taxation or tribute demands.

Chormaqan ruled as the *tammachi* for two years before he died in 1240/1241, most likely from a stroke. The Armenian sources lamented his death, which further

demonstrates that they held a generally positive view of his rule. His wife Altan Khatun (fl. 1220–1245) succeeded him as a regent until one of his lieutenants, Baiju (fl. 1230–1260), was named as his successor.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Titles; *Organization and Administration:* Baiju; *Keshik;* *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah; Ogodei Khan; *Key Places:* Khwarazmian Empire

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Decimal Organization

The Mongol military was organized into units of 10, 100, 1,000, and 10,000. Although Chinggis Khan often receives much credit for this organization, he is not the innovator, as the system had been a staple of military organization in Inner Asia for centuries.

The first known use of the system in Inner Asia was with the Xiongnu Empire (209 BCE–91 CE), and the practice continued with successive empires. While it was certainly used in imperial states and confederations, it is not known if the system was embraced by all members in postimperial settings. For instance, did the system cross over to tribes outside of an empire, and was it used consistently in the absence of an empire? During the rise of Chinggis Khan, the system was still in place among imperial powers such as the Jin Empire and Kara Khitai. Prior to the Jin Empire, the Liao also used it. Among the nomads of Mongolia, it is evident that the Kereit also implemented the decimal system. Temujin, the later Chinggis Khan, first experienced its use with the Kereit.

At the squad level was the *arban*, or unit of 10. Ten of these comprised a *jagun*, or unit of 100, with 10 *jaguns* forming a *mingan*. Initially the *mingan* was the standard unit for large-scale operations, but eventually it was increased to a unit of 10,000, or a *tumen*. Each unit was commanded by a *noyan* (commander) such as an *arban-u noyan*

or *mingan-u noyan*, with *arban-u* being the genitive case. Therefore, the *arban-u noyan* was a commander of 10, the *jagun-u noyan* was a commander of 100, and so forth.

Not all Inner Asian groups used the same formations, as some, such as the Jurchen, included units of 50. During the early days of Temujin's lifetime, the Kereit used units of 10, 100, and 1,000. Although *The Secret History of the Mongols* suggests that the Kereit used units of 10,000, this may have been through later editing. Temujin does not appear to have initially used the decimal organization and instead implemented other formations known as the *kuriyen*, such as when he fought Jamuqa in 1197. The *kuriyen*, or camp, was based on family and household units based on clan identity. After this battle Chinggis Khan disappeared from history for roughly 10 years, presumably in exile in the Jin Empire. When he returned he implemented a decimal system organization among his military forces, apparently convinced that the old system was ineffective. Furthermore, he now appears to have had sufficient numbers to make it effective. Before fighting the Naiman confederation in western Mongolia in 1204, Chinggis Khan assigned commanders to units of 1,000. Then at the *quriltai* of 1206, he awarded his supporters and named many as commanders of *mingans*, or units of 1,000. We know based on the records from this *quriltai* that the military capability of the Mongols in 1206 was at least 95,000 men.

Chinggis Khan revolutionized the military organization of the steppe nomads. Although the decimal system was in place to some extent, he made it standard and also instituted other regulations to destroy the tribal identity, thus allowing the decimal system to expand beyond the core of the Mongols. As new groups joined the Mongols, whether forcibly or voluntarily, they were brought into the decimal system. Those who had supported Chinggis Khan were allowed to maintain their own units, but those who resisted were then placed into existing *mingans*, thus preventing them from remaining in large numbers and posing a threat. Furthermore, once an individual was assigned to a *mingan*, he could not leave it. Perhaps following the example of the Jin Empire, Chinggis Khan also arranged households into decimal units as a support system for the military *mingans*. Thus, households supplied the manpower as well as some of the equipment. Once a military unit was determined, it remained in place. This, however, led to issues of exact numbers. Rarely were the units at full strength thus presenting problems when trying to determine actual numbers.

Gradually this system also came into play in the conquered territories. Defeated nomads were easily assimilated into the system, but sedentary populations posed more of a challenge. In China, due to the vast numbers of Chinese, the Mongols recruited 1 out of every 20 for military service but still appear to have used the standard decimal system for household organization. In Russia, Transcaucasia, and the Middle East, the Mongols used the standard decimal organization for military service (whether as *cheriks* or for other levies) and household organization for tax collection.

The application of the decimal system to the household had yielded more than simply providing manpower and supplies for the military. The organization of households into decimal units required a census. This permitted the Mongols to determine how many men could be brought into military service without draining the economic ability of the household. Furthermore, it allowed the Mongols to assess how much revenue

could be gained from each unit. Initially, as with the military, the *mingan* was the standard unit for taxation, but as the empire expanded and its methods of tax collection improved, the *tumen* (unit of 10,000) became more standard. Its application varied, with use in China occurring faster due to the population. By the era of Mongke, the *tumen* became standard and continued to be used throughout the existence of the Mongol Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Taxation; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Mongke Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; Kereit; *Military:* Cherik; *Objects and Artifacts:* *The Secret History of the Mongols;* *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Kara Khitai; Xi Xia

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Gunpowder

The spread of gunpowder across Eurasia is directly related to the rise of the Mongols and the Chinggis Exchange. Although gunpowder weapons originated in China in the 11th century, they did not spread significantly until the establishment of the Mongol Empire and spread outside of East Asia through the agency of the Pax Mongolica (Mongol Peace). Trade routes became substantially better guarded and more open during the Mongol Empire, thus allowing merchants to travel safely and also allowing the greater movement of goods and ideas, including the recipe for gunpowder.

Fireworks were among the early uses of gunpowder. Weaponized gunpowder came not in the form of explosives but through incendiary devices, such as the fire lance—a gunpowder-filled bamboo tube attached to a spear. It acted as a primitive flamethrower. A single fire lance was not impressive, but entire units could be armed with fire lances. Furthermore, as part of a defensive network by placing the tubes on a rack, a single person could light them and create a wall of flame.

Other uses quickly followed, with various recipes used in bombs that produced smoke, which may have been poisonous, or ignited into a ball of flame. Some bombs developed with spikes that allowed the bomb to embed into a ship's side or a building, thus allowing the fire to spread. All of these could be hurled by a catapult.

Not until the 12th and 13th centuries did engineers in the Song dynasty develop recipes for explosive gunpowder. The Song figured out how to use this combustible energy to launch projectiles from bronze tubes and vases. The missile was conventional, such as arrows. While not very effective singly, the Song could group hundreds of the “fire arrows” together and fire at a kill zone up to 1,000 meters away. Not until the late 13th century did a true cannon appear.

The Mongols first encountered gunpowder-based weapons in their campaigns against the Jin Empire (1125–1234) in northern China. The Jin used explosives and firelances. “Thunder crash bombs,” as the explosives were generally known, were primitive yet effective. Consisting of metal or ceramic containers, they were filled with gunpowder and then a fuse was added. They were delivered through a variety of methods, such as by hurling a bomb from a catapult or lowering it by chains against Mongol troops at the base of walls. While strong enough to annihilate the enemy as well as wooden or skin-covered shelters, the explosives did little damage to the thick earthen city walls. They could also be used as mines, although they were not efficient weapons; when used in well planned ambushes, they proved to be effective in physical and psychological damage.

It does not appear that the Mongols found any effective defense against gunpowder weapons, but they did learn that the weapons had their limitations. They were inaccurate and not often reliable, even though they could be devastating. Perseverance mattered most in siege warfare. Furthermore, while the Mongols recognized the weapons’ shortcomings, they also saw their value. Once they acquired the technology, the Mongols put it to use.

New innovations also appeared throughout the Mongol Empire, such as the cannon. Yet even prior to this either the Mongols or the Song created the rocket in the mid-13th century. It was primarily used for signaling, but there is some evidence that the Mongols also attached small rockets to ballista projectiles to increase their range.

It is not clear if the Mongols used the rocket outside of China—no documentary or archaeological evidence has provided conclusive proof of use. One reason may be that in China, the necessary requirements to manufacture gunpowder were easily available and properly stored, whereas even though Chinese engineers accompanied them, the volatility and logistics of transporting the gunpowder may have discouraged the Mongols from carrying significant amounts. Furthermore, outside of China, it is possible that some of the materials, such as saltpeter needed for gunpowder, were readily available or obtainable in sufficient quantities. Furthermore, naphtha—a petroleum product—was easily available in many parts of the Middle East and worked quite effectively for incendiary needs.

Nonetheless, the Mongol Empire through the Chinggis Exchange was the primary transmitter of the knowledge of gunpowder. While it is unlikely that Europe received gunpowder directly from the Mongols, it does not appear in Europe until after the 1240–1241 invasion and after Europeans traveled as missionaries, envoys, and merchants into the Mongol Empire. Gunpowder spread into India, Central Asia, and the Middle East in a similar fashion—only after the Mongols entered the regions and via the Indian Ocean trade routes.

Oddly enough, gunpowder played a key role in ending the dominance of the horse archer and the Mongols' style of warfare. The Mongol composite bow was more accurate and had a better range and rate of fire than early firearms. As a result, nomadic armies decimated early firearm-wielding infantry. It was not until the 16th and 17th centuries that improved cannon-manufacturing techniques produced easily maneuverable artillery that could counter the mobility of the nomads. Even though the bow remained an excellent weapon, it required years of practice to become skillful, particularly on horseback. Firearms, however, became increasingly inexpensive to manufacture in a short time frame (unlike the composite bow) and required less training. As they were not accurate, the solution was to muster larger formations—someone would hit something.

Thus, while the Mongols contributed to the spread of gunpowder weapons, it ultimately became the weapon that would prevent their return to military dominance after the fall of the Mongol Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Key Events:* Chinggis Exchange; *Military:* Cannon; Trebuchet; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Song Empire

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Irtys River, Battle of the (1209)

Fought in 1209, the Battle of the Irtys River destroyed the Naiman-Merkit alliance. The impact of the Mongols' presence in western Siberia dramatically altered the balance of power in the region. While the Naiman and the Merkit initially fled Mongolia to avoid incorporation into the Mongols after the Battle of Chakirmaut in 1204, their presence in western Siberia created a source of power that potentially threatened Chinggis Khan's new Mongolia. Chinggis Khan, however, did not permit them sufficient time to effectively establish a power base from which to threaten Mongolia.

Not until 1207 did Chinggis Khan decide to destroy any further resistance by the Naiman and Merkit and move westward to confront them. During a halt in the winter of 1208, he accepted the submission of the Oirat. Resuming his march, the Mongols rode through the Ulan Pass in the Altai Mountains and reached a branch of the Irtys River. Here, the Mongols defeated the Naiman and Merkit in 1209. Guchulug escaped

and fled toward first the Qarluqs, then to Uyghuristan, and then to the *gur-khan* of Kara Khitai. Toqtoa of the Merkit was slain in combat, however, and many of his men drowned in the river attempting to flee. Toqtoa's sons and the remaining Merkit fled to the Chu River.

Even with their dispersal, the impact of their defeat drastically altered the balance of power. The Naiman, under Guchulug, eventually established themselves in Kara Khitai, hastening the collapse of that state, while the Merkit moved westward, where they were able to take shelter with Kipchak tribes of the eastern portion of the Kipchak steppes.

Despite the decisive victory at the Irtysh River, the Mongols continued their pursuit of the Naiman and Merkit leaders. The Merkit, led by Qutu and Chila'un, fled toward the Chu River, where a Mongol force under the command of Jebe and Subedei defeated them. After the Merkit's defeat, Qutu, now the leader after Toqtoa's death, the remaining Merkit fled to the Qangli Turks, the eastern branch of the Kipchaks. Mongol envoys demanded their return; however, the Qanglis refused, as they had already granted Qutu sanctuary. To rectify the matter, Subedei and Jebe continued their pursuit of Qutu and

GENERAL JEBE

Jebe, one of Chinggis Khan's most brilliant generals, entered the khan's service after the defeat of the Tayichiud Mongols in 1201. During the battle, a sharpshooter killed Chinggis Khan's horse with a well-placed arrow to the neck and perhaps also wounded Chinggis Khan—the sources are vague. One warrior, Jirqo'adai, publicly revealed that he was the culprit and accepted any consequences for his actions. Chinggis Khan was impressed and gave him the name Jebe, which referred to a specific type of arrow. Jebe soon became one of his closest companions and trusted generals.

At the *quriltai* of 1206, Chinggis Khan recognized Jebe's services. He was also one of Chinggis Khan's *dorben noqas* (four hounds), along with Subedei, Jelme, and Khubilai (not the grandson). The *dorben noqas* and their units were an elite brigade that served with distinction at Chakirmaut. They were particularly known for their tenacious pursuit of fleeing opponents.

This may be one reason why Jebe led many pursuit missions. In 1209, he and Subedei pursued the Naiman and Merkit who fled Mongolia to the Irtysh River and then again to the Chu River. Jebe was also responsible for hunting down Guchulug, a Naiman prince who became the ruler of Kara Khitai. During the war with the Khwarazmian Empire, Jebe pursued Sultan Muhammad II Khwarazmshah as well. Although Muhammad successfully yet narrowly eluded Jebe and Subedei, he died alone from illness and exhaustion on an island in the Caspian Sea shortly afterward.

Yet Jebe did more than hunt down enemy leaders. Against the Jin Empire, Jebe served as the commander of Chinggis Khan's vanguard in 1211. Jebe became well known for his deep invasions into enemy territory, feigned retreats that were carried out over days, and of course his tenacity that allowed him to cover several days' travel in a single day. Jebe died in 1223 during the famous reconnaissance en force that he and Subedei conducted after the death of Muhammad Khwarazmshah II in 1220. He died at the Battle of the Kalka River in 1223.

the Merkit. This resulted in a battle in 1209 between the Mongols and the Qanglis. The Mongols won, slaying Qutu. Rather than attempting to incorporate the Qanglis into their empire, the Mongols returned to Mongolia after encountering the Khwarazmian forces also operating in the region.

Chinggis Khan's victory over the Naiman and Merkit at the Irtysh River, while vastly underappreciated in military history, can perhaps be considered a watershed moment, carrying great significance not only for Chinggis Khan but also for world history. The victory secured Mongolia from a potentially dangerous confederation of Naiman and Merkit which also could serve as a rallying point for any other tribe dissatisfied with Chinggis Khan's rule, potentially including many of his own family members and supporters. It was an important milestone in the development of the Mongol army as well, as it demonstrated the superiority of the disciplined and centrally organized army of Chinggis Khan over the confederation armies in which one person was nominally in charge while leaders of the tribes comprising the confederation often questioned the leaders' authority and considered their own interests rather than the good of the whole confederation. Also, the battle made the Mongols a true factor outside of Mongolia. While the Mongols were involved in Xi Xia, this battle opened up the western lands to the Mongols. The defeat at the Irtysh set off the flight of the surviving Merkit led by Qudu and Chila'un farther west to the pastures of the Qanglis and Kipchaks in an effort to escape from the Mongols and Guchulug, the last of the Naiman princes, who escaped into Central Asia. In the wake of his destructive flight, the Qarluqs, Turkic nomads near Lake Balkash, submitted to Chinggis Khan in 1209. Additionally, the *idiqu* (ruler) of the Uyghurs came to Chinggis Khan with tribute. Whereas Kara Khitai had ruled Uyghuristan, the *idiqu* now switched his allegiance to Chinggis Khan after seeing his lands pillaged by Guchulug and being given refuge in Kara Khitai. Now the Yeke Mongol Ulus stretched far beyond Mongolia.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Uyghurs; *Military:* Chakirmaut, Battle of; Subedei; *Key Places:* Kara Khitai; Kipchak Steppes; Uyghuristan

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Java, Invasion of (1292–1293)

Khubilai Khan (r. 1260–1294) sent an envoy to the island of Java, one of many points to the south whose submission demanded and an important trading partner with

Mongol China and Song China before it. Unfortunately, in strict violation of Mongolian diplomatic propriety, a local king had the envoy branded, tortured, and sent back. Such a mistreatment of a peaceful envoy was tantamount to a declaration of war, and in 1292 Khubilai ordered an expedition to be armed and sent some 30,000 men and 1,000 ships. After a rough initial voyage the flotilla duly arrived in Java, where it established a bridgehead and called upon the locals to submit. Most did submit, but later some revolted, forcing the Mongols to withdraw in 1293 and sail back to China. According to the Chinese source, about 3,000 men were lost, about 10 percent of those dispatched, but the returning fleet came back with substantial booty. Khubilai, despite these gains, was not pleased and initially punished the unsuccessful commanders of the attack, although later he pardoned them. There were no more military efforts in the direction of Java, nor were any planned at the time of Khubilai's death in 1294.

Thus, this expenditure seems to have been one more maritime failure for Khubilai, on a par with two disastrous attempts to invade Japan, in 1274 and 1281, and entanglements in Vietnam and Champa, although losses were more moderate and the booty was substantial. Also, relations with Java actually improved after the invasion, and Java continued to be a most important trading partner with Mongol China. So, in the end Khubilai may have gained more than he lost.

But as we now know, there is more to the story than information in dry Chinese accounts. Javanese sources provide a rich supplement, although this material is little known outside of Indonesia, and much has only been recently published. There is also the problem of a differing set of cultural assumptions in 13th-century Java as compared to China, for example, making Javanese sources largely incomprehensible to non-Indonesians.

Javanese sources, for example, including inscriptions, are literary, mostly poetic. In them kings and other heroes are special beings—gods—and are governed by an elaborate code of ritual behavior. Justification and power are religiously based. We even find exchanges of princesses as a major motivator for history, reflecting the dual power of the time residing in a hero but only in that he loved and had a female partner. Thus, motivation in the Javanese sources can appear quite different than and even contradictory to motivation in Chinese sources, Chinese sources in this case backed up by Mongolian values. It was the Mongols and not the Chinese ruling China at the time.

Nonetheless, when we compare one Javanese source to the other, there is clearly a basis of fact in them in terms of what Javanese writers have to tell us about the Mongols and their invasion. Much new information is there if we just read carefully.

We learn, for example, contrary to what we might expect, that the relationship between Java and Khubilai's China was nothing new. Trade between Mongol and Song China had been going on for some time, and there are tantalizing hints of trade conflicts, even of a general submission to the Mongols of Javanese powers well before 1293. Second, Khubilai's fleet and his soldiers sailed into a hornet's nest. Not only was there a great civil war leading to the death of King Kertnagara and the rise of King Wiraraja, but the Mongols unwisely got involved in it in support of future king Wiraraja. The period was also a time of great change in Java, with the final collapse of the great trading state of Sriwijaya and the rise of Maja-Pahit in its place.

Appearing at such a time, the Mongols, rather than being seen as invaders from outside, appeared as an opportunity, as important potential allies, and even as a force of mercenaries able to help end the civil war and establish a new king, Wiraraja, the real founder of Javanese unity. Wiraraja claims Khubilai as a friend in the Javanese sources. But alas for the Mongols, it is also clear that Wiraraja turned his back on his allies in the end, bushwhacking some in the royal palace and ambushing others on the way back to the Mongol base. He forced the remaining army to withdraw, although this does not seem to have affected Yuan relations with Java very much in the end.

But that said, Khubilai did not take part in the expedition himself, in spite of the claims of the Javanese sources. And while a marriage alliance or two was quite possible given the times, there is no evidence that Khubilai's main motivation was a desire for a Javanese princess, however beautiful and perfect, or that he was available, at his advanced age, for single combat with Javanese heroes.

Despite such claims of Javanese heroic sources, there is clearly information in them that significantly expands our knowledge of the invasion. The hints of a long-term relationship between the Mongol government and various Javanese potentates are significant for sure. This may even have arisen in connection with the Mongol military actions in Vietnam and Champa, to the north. Likewise, the Javanese seem unthreatened by the Mongols and hardly view them as an army come to do them in with fire and sword. And on what basis would Wiraraja consider the king of the Tatars—e.g., Khubilai—his friend and ally? Something is clearly missing from the Chinese sources. And even the expulsion of the Mongols has no nationalist content in Javanese sources as contrasted to the destruction of the Mongol fleets off Japan. The bad faith of Wiraraja was just a variation on the theme of the Javanese civil war. There is not even any evidence that captured Mongols and Chinese were slaughtered. Some may have just settled down. Tan Ta Sen may be quite correct that the origin of Islam in Java was due to Muslim soldiers from Khubilai's army.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Key Events:* Japan, Invasion of; *Primary Documents:* Document 37

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Kaifeng, Siege of (1233)

Kaifeng, the last major Jin capital, fell to a Mongol siege in 1233. With the Mongol invasions of the Jin Empire, the Jin court fled to Kaifeng, the southern capital of the Jin

Empire (1125–1234), in 1214. This action triggered the destruction of Zhongdu as well as a war that lasted 20 years. Kaifeng was located along the Huanghe River and had a population of over 1 million people.

Although Zhongdu fell in 1215, with the emperor out of reach in Kaifeng, Chinggis Khan's war against the Jin continued and entered a stalemate when he departed in 1219 for Central Asia. Chinggis Khan left his most trusted general, Muqali, in charge of the campaign against the Jin while he moved west to deal with the Khwarazmian Empire. Although Muqali's Mongol contingent was relatively small, perhaps 30,000 men, his army was augmented by Tangut and Khitan troops as well as some troops that deserted from the Jin Empire. Muqali made significant gains against the Jin, but most of these were lost after he died in 1223. The Tangut rebellion in Xi Xia in 1225 and then Chinggis Khan's death in 1227 delayed the Mongols from regaining territory that the Jin had recovered. Thus, when Ogodei Khan came to the throne in 1229–1230, he planned to destroy the Jin Empire once and for all.

As with most of the Mongol invasions, after the Mongols entered the enemy territory they divided their forces to cause the most destruction possible. The Jin defenses collapsed, and by 1231 the Jin Empire had been reduced to the province of Honan and the city of Kaifeng.

The Jin Empire's situation grew more dire in 1233 when Ogodei accepted an alliance with the Song dynasty, south of the Jin Empire. Although the Song contributed 20,000 men to the war, the Jin easily defeated them. The Mongols had accepted the Song not for their military ability but instead so that the Song could supply them with food. The Song, meanwhile, hoped to acquire territory lost to the Jin over the years. Although the Mongols dominated the battlefield in all aspects, their swath of destruction often limited the food resources in the region.

To the Song the alliance seemed odd on the surface, as the Mongols ultimately conquered their empire as well in 1279. Yet in 1233, the alliance seemed reasonable to the Song Empire. They believed that the long war against the Jin would leave the victor (Mongols or Jin) weak and thus not a threat to the Song. Furthermore, they believed that afterward the Song would be able to take advantage of the situation and gain territory.

Becoming impatient with the war, Ogodei sent his most talented general, Subedei, to subdue Kaifeng. Subedei, who had been skirmishing with Kipchak nomads and others along the Volga River, led his army against Kaifeng in 1233. Subedei's opening maneuvers successfully lured the Jin army from the city and its impressive fortifications. While other Mongol forces dealt with the Jin field army, Subedei crossed the Huanghe River.

The Jin realized that they had been tricked and attempted to burst the dams that held the yearly flooding of the Huanghe River in check. This effort did little to delay Subedei, however. Subedei, who had campaigned against the Jin during the lifetime of Chinggis Khan, had anticipated this. When the Jin engineers arrived at the dikes, they found Mongols already in possession of them. The Jin retreated. Subedei then began to encircle the city, beginning miles away from it. His actions were based on a Mongol hunting technique known as the *nerge*. The circle gradually tightened and herded refugees toward Kaifeng. Those who attempted to escape the circle by breaking out were cut down.

Although Subedei drove more people into the city, which could potentially add to the defenders, it was a calculated risk. The refugees not only carried horrifying stories of the Mongol attacks but also added to the number of people who needed food, water, shelter, and medicine. Sieges often lasted only as long as the populace had food and water—additional refugees exhausted the supply faster. In May 1233, the city fell after a relatively brief siege. The Mongols did not subject Kaifeng to destruction or excessive pillaging. Yelu Chucai, the primary adviser to Ogodei, had convinced the Mongols that in the long term the city would be more beneficial if it were spared the celebratory sacking that usually accompanied a Mongol victory.

Despite Subedei's best efforts, the fall of Kaifeng did not mean the end of the war. The Jin emperor had fled to Caizhou. Nonetheless, at this point the end of the Jin Empire was a foregone conclusion, as Caizhou was the last Jin stronghold and was ill-prepared to withstand the Mongols. Ogodei recalled Subedei to plan for a major campaign in the Kipchak steppes and against the Russian principalities. Caizhou was left to a lower-ranking general to finish, as the Jin Empire no longer remained a threat. It too fell in 1234, thus ending the Jin Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Muqali; Yelu Chucai; *Individuals:* Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Tangut; *Military:* Subedei; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Khwarazmian Empire; Xi Xia; Zhongdu

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Kalka River, Battle of the (1223)

The Mongols' first significant appearance in Europe was the Battle of the Kalka River in 1223. The encounter was the result of a reconnaissance expedition by the Mongol generals Subedei and Jebe. During the campaign against the Khwarazmian Empire that began in 1219, Chinggis Khan granted permission to Subedei and Jebe to continue to explore the regions west of the Khwarazmian Empire.

After raiding much of northern Iran, Subedei and Jebe invaded Armenia and Georgia before shattering their armies. They then crossed the Caucasus Mountains. From the Caucasus Mountains, Subedei's army of approximately 20,000 men entered the Kipchak

steppes. Here they faced an army of Kipchaks and Alans. The Mongols defeated the Alans by convincing the Kipchaks that they were more alike in both language and custom, so the Kipchaks deserted the Alans. After defeating the Alans, the Mongols then attacked the Kipchaks. The defeated Kipchaks, led by Koten Khan, fled to the Russian principality of Kiev, as his tribe had several marriage alliances with the Russians. The major alliance was with Koten's brother-in-law, Prince Mstislav Mstislavich of Galicia. Koten convinced the Russians that if they did not join forces now, the Mongols would advance upon the Russians after defeating the Kipchaks. Furthermore, the Russians realized that if defeated, the Kipchaks would most likely be incorporated into the Mongol forces.

Mongol envoys denied any interest in the Russian cities, which was probably true. They insisted that their conflict was only with the Kipchaks. The Russians, however, killed the Mongol envoys and marshaled their troops. The Russian force included Grand Prince Mstislav Romanovich of Kiev, Prince Mikhail of Chernigov, Mstislav Mstislavich of Galich, Daniilo Romanovich (the grandson of Mstislav of Kiev), and others. As they marched to find the Mongols, they encountered another Mongol envoy who told them that war was now guaranteed, as they had killed the previous envoy. Although the Russians did not know much about the Mongols, the murder of the first envoy was a bold move, as the Kipchaks had told them that the Mongols defeated everyone they had encountered.

The Russians and Kipchaks joined forces at the Dnieper River. Not long after crossing it, their scouts located the Mongols. Eager for battle, Danilo Romanovich rode ahead with a large force to scout out the enemy. He and Prince Mstislav Mstislavich attacked a small Mongol detachment and pursued the survivors. Other princes advanced after Mstislav Mstislavich's success and joined the pursuit. Although the Mongols fled before the Russian, they always remained in view but out of reach. The Russo-Kipchak force pursued the Mongols for eight days before they reached the Kalka River. Jebe was killed by Kipchak arrows during the retreat. Exhausted by the chase, Prince Mstislav Mstislavich established camp along the Kalka River while Prince Daniil Romanovich began the ninth day of pursuit across the Kalka River.

The Kipchaks, horse archers like the Mongols, formed the vanguard and served as scouts. During the chase, they frequently skirmished with the retreating Mongols. These actions kept the Mongols within reach and allowed the slower Russian forces to catch up to the vanguard. Upon their approach, the Mongols once again took flight over the rolling hills of the steppe. As the Russians and Kipchaks rode in for the kill, other Mongols emerged from behind the hills. Slowly it dawned on the Russians and Kipchaks that the entire retreat had been a trap, as they were surrounded and cut down in volleys of arrows.

The Kipchaks awoke from their stupor first and broke through the Mongol ranks, retreating to the Kalka River with Mongols in pursuit on fresh horses. The Russian princes and their troops were cut down by the Mongol onslaught. Meanwhile, the terrified Kipchaks reached the Russian camp at the Kalka River but did not halt. They continued their flight, stampeding through the camp and throwing it turmoil.

As the Mongols had closely pursued the Kipchaks, the Russians had no chance to recover from the Kipchak stampede. The Mongols massacred the Russian camp before

anyone could organize a defense. Many of the Russians attempted to flee, only to be cut down. Prince Mstislav Romanovich of Kiev, his son-in-law Prince Andrei, and Prince Aleksandr Dubrovich retreated and rallied a force at a rocky area on the banks of the Kalka and resisted Mongol attacks. As this occurred, other Mongols pursued the Kipchaks and any Russians who fled all the way to the banks of the Dnieper.

Prince Mstislav Romanovich and the others held out for three days before surrendering. The Mongols celebrated their victory with a feast. They constructed a platform to sit upon for their feast, where they ate, drank, probably raucously sang songs, stomped their feet, and perhaps even danced. The captive Russian princes, however, did not enjoy the banquet, for the Mongols used them in the construction of the platform as support for the planks—they were crushed as the Mongols celebrated.

Of the major Russian leaders, only Prince Mstislav Mstislavich survived, having safely crossed the Dnieper, and only 1 in 10 soldiers returned home. As for the Mongols, after the victory they simply turned east and disappeared. The Russians never learned who the Mongols really were and explained away the defeat as a punishment from God for their sins.

The Mongols arrived in the Kipchak steppe not intent on conquest. This crushing victory was only part of a reconnaissance mission. Although they destroyed the Russians' and Kipchaks' military abilities, they did not seize any territory. They did, however, gain intelligence about their future opponents, tactics, and geography for a future invasion. The Russians meanwhile simply resumed their civil wars and daily life, evidently not worried that the Mongols might return. Unfortunately, 14 years later the Mongols did return in unprecedented numbers intent on conquest.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; *Military:* Subedei; *Key Places:* Khwarazmian Empire; Kipchak Steppes

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Kose Dagh, Battle of (1243)

The Battle of Kose Dagh, a Mongol defeat of the Seljuk Turks, effectively ended the independence of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum (pronounced “room”). Rum (Rome) referred to the former Byzantine lands conquered by the Turks after the Battle of Manzikirt

in 1071. With their victory, the door was now open for the Mongols to conquer or exert influence over all of Anatolia.

Prior to 1240, the Mongols expressed little interest in the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. After Chormaqan's death in 1240, the Mongols stationed in Transcaucasia renewed their expansion. During the reign of Sultan Ala al-Din Kayqubad (1219–1237), hostilities between the Seljuks and the Mongols consisted of a few raids. After Kayqubad's death, Giyath al-Din Kaykhusraw (1237–1245) came to the throne. During the initial years of his reign, his rule coincided with that of Chormaqan Noyan, the Mongol *tanmachi* stationed in Transcaucasia. Upon the death of Chormaqan Noyan, Chormaqan's subordinate, Baiju, replaced him as the regional *tanmachi*. It was under Baiju Noyan that the existing status quo between the Mongols and the Seljuks altered.

It appears that the Seljuks possessed little indication that the Mongols might invade Rum as they carried out their own military campaigns close to Mongol territory in 1241. Only a year later in 1242, a Mongol force accompanied by contingents of Georgian and Armenian troops invaded Rum. Their forces raided up to the fortress of Zarid, thus engaging the Mongols and Seljuks in war. In addition, accompanied by Armenian and Georgian troops, Baiju attacked the town of Karin, sacking it after a siege of two months.

The Seljuk sultan Ghiyath al-Din assembled his army, including a sizable force of mercenaries, in 1243. The Seljuk army met the Mongols at Kose Dagh, located between Karin and Erzinjan in modern-day eastern Turkey in 1243. It is thought that the Seljuks had a slight advantage in numbers. Nonetheless, the battle was fairly even until Aghbaha, the Georgian prince of Gag, defeated the right wing of the Seljukid army. The right wing folded and fled, with the sultan himself fleeing to Ankara. Nonetheless, the battle was not over. Darkness forced the two armies to separate for the night. During this respite, Ghiyath al-Din learned that some of his amirs, or commanders, considered submitting to the Mongols. With fear of defeat and treachery, the Seljuk army withdrew during the night.

Thus, on the second day of the battle the Mongols discovered a deserted camp. Initially the Mongols believed the Seljuks' flight to be a trap, as it was a tactic the Mongols had used in the past. Soon they realized that the Seljuks had abandoned the field of battle, and they advanced and conquered the rest of the sultanate, with the Georgians and Armenians serving in the vanguard.

With the Seljuks defeated, the Mongols sacked the city of Sivas, destroying much of its fortifications. They then seized the cities of Caesarea, Ankara, and the Seljuk capital of Konya. On their return to Armenia, the city of Erzinjan fell after it refused to pay tribute. Furthermore, they installed a *daruqachi* to govern Rum. After the defeat and the reduction of his most important cities, Sultan Ghiyath al-Din submitted and agreed to pay tribute in gold, horses, cattle, sheep, and slaves amounting to 400,000 dinars in value.

The defeat of the Seljuks also allowed the Mongols to intimidate and influence other powers in Anatolia, such as Trebizond, a former Byzantine province. Although the Mongols initially attacked Trebizond in 1240, setting fire to the citadel, they did not conquer it. Trebizond probably submitted to the Mongols after 1243.

The kingdom of Nicea, a Byzantine state formed after the sacking of Constantinople in 1204 by the Fourth Crusade, feared either Turkmen or Mongol invasion or both. John Vatatzes III met with Sultan Ghiyath al-Din's envoys and concluded a treaty prior to the Mongol victory at Kose Dagh. John hoped that the treaty would prevent the Seljuks from attacking him but would also control the nomadic Turkmen in the region. Furthermore, he hoped that the Seljuks would serve as a buffer against the Mongols.

The Mongol victory at Kose Dagh ended those hopes as well as John Vatatzes III's plan to campaign against the Latin-held Constantinople. Although he launched his invasion, the campaign ended upon hearing of the Mongol invasion of Rum. Rather than an offensive against Constantinople, John was forced to strengthen his frontier fortifications against a possible Mongol attack.

The Mongol victory also led to the disruption of the stability and concord between the Seljuks and Byzantines, or rather Nicea and Konya. Between the influx of Turks fleeing the Mongols and those who often only nominally accepted Seljuks suzerainty and then also the appearance of Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah in the 1230s, the Seljuks devoted much of their energies to quelling rebellions and the ephemeral kingdom created by Jalal al-Din. Additionally, the Seljuks attempted to take advantage of the power vacuum in the Diyar Bakr region in eastern Turkey and northern Iraq rather than show concern for the Mongol forces after Jalal al-Din's death. The defeat at Kose Dagh only exacerbated the erosion of Seljuk control over their frontiers, as it undermined Seljuk authority and their ability to control the Turkmen nomads. While the Mongols defeated and conquered much of Anatolia, it was not a central territory for them, so they paid less attention to it and primarily exploited it for additional pasture and tribute payments. Thus, much of the region would be in turmoil until the rise of the Il-Khanate.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Baiju; *Tanmachi;* *Individuals:* Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah; *Key Places:* Trebizond

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Liegnitz, Battle of (1241)

Fought in 1241, the Battle of Liegnitz pitted the Mongols against the Polish and the Teutonic Knights. During the invasion of Europe in 1241, the main army commanded

by Batu (fl. 1230–1255), grandson of Chinggis Khan, and the general Subedei invaded Hungary, but an additional force rode north into Poland. Baidar, son of Chagatai, and Orda, Batu's brother, commanded the army of approximately 20,000. Their primary objective was to prevent the armies of Bohemia, Poland, and Prussia from aiding the Hungarians. Although Europe was filled with warring kingdoms and Poland in particular was fragmented, the Hungarian king Bela IV had relatives among the Polish dukes, such as his son-in-law Boleslaw V of Cracow and Sandomir, as well as Henry II of Silesia (r. 1238–1241), Bela's cousin.

Baidar and Orda's forces began their attack by raiding the possessions of Boleslaw around Sandomir in February 1241, burning the cities of Lublin and Zawichost. Using the frozen Vistula River as a bridge, they sacked the lightly defended Sandomir. Baidar and Orda then divided their forces to terrorize a wider area and convinced the Poles that a much larger force had invaded. Baidar's troops continued toward Cracow. Boleslaw gathered his army and routed Baidar's vanguard. With the army of Cracow now in the field, he slowly retreated, staying close enough to menace the Poles. Baidar successfully lured them into an ambush on March 18, 1241, and crushed Boleslaw's army. Boleslaw fled to Hungary, while Baidar burned Cracow.



The Mongols defeated a combined army of Poles, Czechs, and Germans at Liegnitz in 1241. This ink-on-vellum illustration is from the *Legend of Saint Hedwig* (1353). (Ancient Art and Architecture Collection Ltd./Alamy Stock Photo)

As Baidar advanced west across the Oder Valley, the Polish nobility withdrew rather than face the Mongols on their own. The shock of Cracow's fall alarmed more powerful nobles, however. Soon the Mongols learned that Henry II of Silesia rallied the northern princes near Liegnitz, where they awaited a powerful army led by King Vaclav I (1230–1253) of Bohemia. With this news, Orda rejoined Baidar and rode to Liegnitz to engage it before Vaclav arrived.

Baidar and Orda arrived to find a formidable army. Henry's army consisted of the Silesian dukes; Duke Mieszko of Oppeln; a margrave from Bohemia named Boleslas, who arrived before Vaclav; and units from the military orders of the church. These included a small force of Knights Templar and a more sizable force of Teutonic Knights led by Poppo von Osterna from Prussia. Nonetheless, it was only slightly larger than that of the Mongols, approximately 25,000 men, and a large percentage of them were peasants and townspeople conscripted for the battle.

The Mongols engaged Henry's army in April 1241. Unbeknownst to Henry, Vaclav's army was only a day's march away. Henry divided his army into four battles, as the Europeans called their military formations. One was commanded by Margrave Boleslas and augmented by his soldiers. The remnants of Boleslaw of Cracow's army along with peasant conscripts formed the second battle. Duke Mieszko commanded his own forces and was augmented by the powerful Teutonic Knights in the third battle. Henry commanded the largest battle, with the combined forces of Silesia and the Templars, who held the center of their line.

The battle began as the Mongol vanguard advanced in eerie silence except for the beating of drums. Henry's Silesian knights rode to meet them but faltered in the face of the Mongols' archery. Impatient, Henry ordered the rest of the knights, including the Teutonic Knights, to charge. The Mongols retreated, but as the knights pursued and became distant from their infantry, more Mongol horse archers appeared on the knights' flanks, raking them with arrows. Meanwhile, the retreating Mongol vanguard did not flee in panic and continued to shoot arrows by turning in their saddles. As the distance grew between the knights and their camp, Mongol riders came behind them with smoke bombs, obscuring what the infantry could see.

As the pursuit of the Mongols continued, the knights' formation broke as the horses tired and casualties mounted from Mongol archery. Stragglers were cut down. Before the knights could re-form their ranks, Mongol heavy cavalry passed through the light cavalry and collided with the knights. Their momentum decimated the knights. Those who were not killed by the Mongols' lances found themselves pulled from their saddles, as the Mongol lances also had a hook specifically for that purpose. Few escaped the deadly trap. Although Poppo von Osterna, the Teutonic Knights' leader, escaped, the majority of the Teutonic Knights and Templars were annihilated.

Meanwhile, the European infantry waited, unsure of what occurred behind the wall of smoke, hearing only distant screams and the noise of battle. Then through the smoke, a hail of arrows rained down on the infantry, now without cavalry support. Even as this occurred, charging Mongols broke through the wall of smoke as other forces encircled the infantry. With any retreat now blocked, the Mongols rode around them, firing into the Europeans' massed ranks. The result was devastating. Few of the infantry escaped

MINERS ON THE MOVE

For the battle at Liegnitz, hundreds of townspeople and peasants were conscripted to augment the Polish forces. This included a contingent of several hundred German gold miners who volunteered to fight the Mongols, probably to protect their mines. At Liegnitz, the miners became part of the battle commanded by Margrave Boleslas. As it was primarily infantry, it suffered heavy casualties. Those who survived, which included several miners, were captured. It is unclear what happened to the nonminers, but once the Mongols determined the skills of the German miners, they were sent to modern-day Kyrgyzstan to work in mines in the Tien Shan Mountains. The private goal of William of Rubruck was to locate these miners and tend to their spiritual needs.

with their lives. Duke Henry briefly escaped, but the Mongols pursued and caught him. He was beheaded, and the Mongols put his head atop a lance to display before the city of Liegnitz before they sacked it. Afterward, the Mongols counted their slain opponents by cutting off the left ear of each. Nine large sacks of ears were later presented to Batu.

In one fell blow, the Mongols destroyed the military might of Poland and Prussia. Only Vaclav remained as an obstacle to the domination of Poland. However, Baidar and Orda did not seek to conquer Poland, just render it defenseless. Furthermore, their small army had also suffered sufficient casualties, thus making a battle with Vaclav a risky proposition. As their objective was to simply keep Vaclav from aiding Hungary, they led him on a wild-goose chase, which drew him farther and farther away from Hungary, the Mongols' primary target. Once this was achieved, Orda and Baidar divided into smaller forces to ride to Hungary, pillaging along the way.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Batu; *Key Events:* Europe, Invasion of; *Military:* Armor; Mohi, Battle of; Subedei; Weapons

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Mohi, Battle of (April 1241)

Fought in 1241, the Battle of Mohi, also known as the Battle of the Sajo River, saw the Mongols encounter and crush the armies of Hungary. The invasion began in winter—

February 1241—after the Mongols completed their conquest of the Rus' principalities. While 20,000 men invaded Poland, Batu and Subedei invaded Hungary with an army of approximately 40,000 men.

After the Mongols crushed the Kipchaks and the Rus', they then moved on to Eastern Europe. The Hungarians knew of the Mongols' approach. Much of their intelligence came from Kipchak refugees. As the Mongols moved across the Volga River in 1236, the Kipchaks, as nomads, were their primary targets. Most of the Kipchaks were defeated and submitted to the Mongols, who incorporated them into their army. Other Kipchaks fled westward. One Kipchak leader, Kotei Khan, led 40,000 Kipchak families into Hungary to seek refuge. King Bela IV (r. 1235–1270), knowing of the Mongol approach, welcomed their arrival and granted them refuge on the condition that their leaders accept Christianity and be baptized.

Not long after the Kipchaks' arrival, the appearance of Mongol envoys complicated matters. The Mongols claimed that all nomads from the steppes were their subjects by command of heaven and that Bela should return them. Anyone who disobeyed the will of heaven was a renegade. Should King Bela IV violate the wishes of heaven (*tenggeri*), he too would be considered a renegade. Bela IV not only refused but quickly became unable to comply with the demand even if wished, as the Kipchaks fled Hungary after their leader, Kotei, was murdered. This did little to deter the Mongols from invading.

To enter Hungary, the Mongols had to cross the Carpathian Mountains, which were fortified. Although the fortifications slowed the Mongols, they were soon overrun by March 14, 1241. As this occurred, Bela and the nobility put aside their dispute in the face of danger to them all. On April 9, 1241, King Bela advanced with an army of 70,000 men. They encountered the Mongol vanguard, which retreated before the overwhelming numbers of Hungarians. The retreat continued until the Hungarians reached the plain of Mohi, located between the Sajo and Tisza Rivers. The Hungarians camped in the plain, unaware that the Mongols specifically chose this site as the battlefield. The Mongols then crossed the Sajo River.

At Mohi, Bela's camp was protected by a circle of wagons, which was their standard practice. In doing so, the camp was guarded against a sudden cavalry charge but also served as a rallying point and headquarters for his army. He also sent 1,000 men to guard the bridge that crossed the Sajo River. No other crossings existed for miles.

Around dawn, the bridge came under attack as Batu's archers fired volley after volley. In addition, he brought up trebuchets that launched naphtha, or a flammable petroleum-based pitch. The onslaught was overwhelming and a bit startling, as the use of catapults in a field battle was a rare sight in medieval warfare. Despite a desperate defense, the Hungarians grudgingly retreated from the bridge but ensured that the Mongols also suffered heavy casualties.

Although the Mongols captured the bridge, this was only a part of their attack. As Batu attacked the bridge, Subedei attempted to find another location to ford the river and did, behind the Hungarian lines. His sudden appearance forced the Hungarians to fall back to their camp rather than face a two-front attack. As the Hungarians readied their defense, the Mongols surrounded the camp and bombarded it with trebuchet missiles and arrows. As the siege carried on, the Hungarians spotted a gap in the western

HUNGARY LOSES ALLIES

Despite his magnanimous behavior, King Bela IV also held selfish motives for granting refuge to the Kipchaks, especially such a large number. Tensions between Bela and his feudal vassals were high, as Bela increased his authority throughout the kingdom. The Kipchaks, whose lives he saved, owed their allegiance to the king and would serve as a nice counterweight to his vassals who were reluctant to lose their own power and influence. The arrival of the Kipchaks did nothing to ease these tensions.

Conflict between the nomadic Kipchaks and the sedentary Hungarian population arose almost instantly. As the Kipchaks came not only with 40,000 families (almost 200,000 people) but also flocks and herds of sheep, goats, cattle, and horses, they required a large amount of pasture. The nomads did little to distinguish between pasture and farmland, and thus animals grazed and trampled the crops of the peasants, leading to violence between the farmers and the nomads. As the peasants worked for the feudal lords, the nobles took advantage of this conflict to seize Kóten and hang him. Rather than intimidating the Kipchaks, it enraged them. Caught between the Mongol threat and the Hungarian populace, the Kipchaks decided to leave. The nomads headed south into the Balkan Mountains, pillaging and burning as they went.

portion of the Mongol ranks. Seeing this, the Hungarians sallied from their camp. Soon the entire camp poured into the gap. Many of them dropped weapons and even armor to hasten their flight. In their haste and desperation, they did not realize that it was a trap. The Mongols intentionally left the hole in their lines, as they realized that the Hungarian force was large enough that they could give a very determined resistance if they had no chance of escape. But as the gap gave them hope, the idea of fighting to the last man vanished. The Mongols allowed them to flee before wheeling upon them and slaughtering the fleeing men.

The pursuit lasted for three days, leaving miles of carnage. Now with the army destroyed, the Mongols raided Hungary unopposed. No one escaped the Mongols' wrath. Although Bela IV escaped Mohi, the Mongols continued to pursue him until he reached the Adriatic Sea and escaped by boat as arrows rained down upon it.

Despite their overwhelming victory in Hungary, they did not remain there long. Although the rest of Europe was in a panic as rumors of the Mongols' approach and destruction reached them, Batu ordered his armies back across the Carpathian Mountains. The death of Ogodei Khan required that Batu and the other Mongol princes return to select a new Khan. Nonetheless, Hungary remained a shadow of its former might for decades, and the rest of Europe lived in fear of future invasions.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Individuals:* Batu; Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; *Key Events:* Europe, Invasion of; *Military:* Armor; Liegnitz, Battle of; Subedei; Trebuchet; Weapons

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Siege Warfare

In the early days of the Mongol conquests, siege warfare—warfare designed to capture a city or stronghold—was a weakness that Chinggis Khan and his generals had to overcome if they were to hold territory and not just raid. Through their invasions of sedentary realms, the Mongols added engineers into their armies through conscription, but individuals also voluntarily joined them. Although the Mongols developed a few of their own engineers, they were almost completely dependent on either Muslims or Han Chinese for manning and manufacturing artillery and other siege equipment.

Generally, the Mongols reserved sieges for the later part of a campaign. The Mongols began the campaign with the reduction of smaller towns and spread the armies out to engage a broad front before uniting the armies for a greater target. This provided the Mongols with sufficient manpower for the siege of larger locations while also preventing their opponent from taking the initiative against them. In areas where manpower was limited, rather than laying siege, the Mongols blockaded a town to starve an enemy into surrendering. In addition, the Mongols often bypassed strongly fortified cities. By isolating strongholds, these areas lost their strategic importance. If the Mongols could not reduce the city or fortress, they often built a counterfortress to blockade it. Then the Mongols simply waited the enemy out until they succumbed to hunger or diplomatic means. When they came to a well-fortified citadel, the Mongols encircled it with a wall that also had gates for their own attacks.

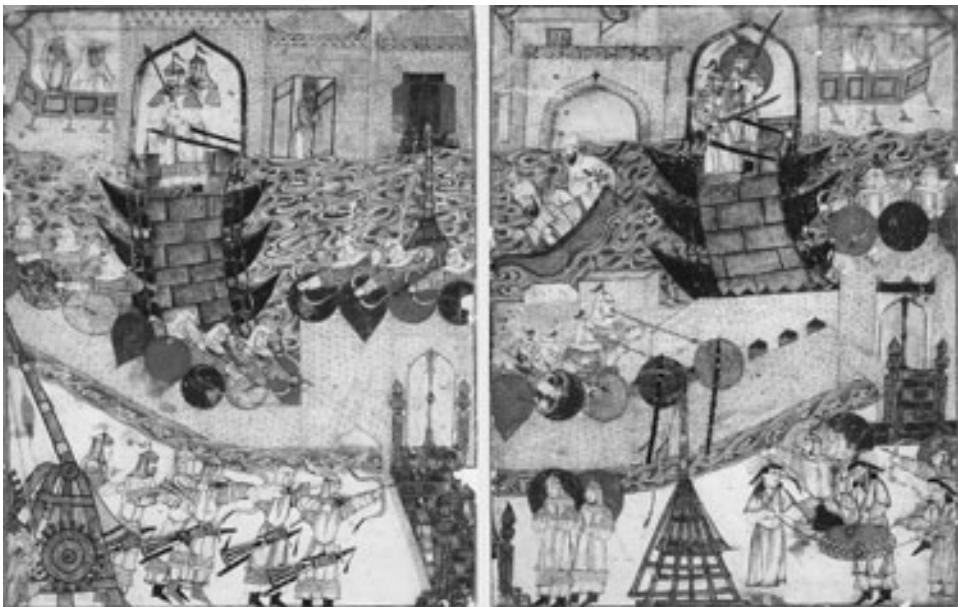
The use of this wall, known as an *ilal*, became standard practice for the Mongols in the periods after the Khwarazmian War. It is unclear if they also carried this out during their encounters against the Jin or if any antecedents for this existed among previous steppe powers in Mongolia or in northern China.

While the Mongols conquered the smaller towns and villages, they collected numerous captives and conscripts. These prisoners then performed the combined services of corvée labor and arrow fodder. After seizing a city, town, or village, the Mongols divided the population into units of 10, with each Mongol soldier receiving a unit. These units were ordered to gather grass, wood, earth, and stone. If any of the prisoners fell behind during the march to the next target location, the Mongols executed them. When the levies arrived at the destination for attack, they filled the moat or trench quickly with the stones and other objects they carried while being shot at by the defenders.

Those who survived also worked on building siege engines under the direction of siege engineers. Some machines were constructed on site from local materials, but the Mongols also had disassembled siege weapons transported by camels that traveled behind the main army. This allowed the army to move swiftly, while the siege equipment arrived after the vicinity had been secured. The city received little respite from a constant barrage by the siege weapons and the Mongols' archery. The siege weapons launched naphtha, a flaming petroleum product, in addition to stones. Those levies not manning siege weapons then did manual labor, such as digging trenches or erecting the defensive wall.

These captives, however, were not excluded from actual military duties. Indeed, the captive levies endured more danger than most of the Mongols soldiers except on the final assault. The levies manned battering rams under hardened shelters known as *cats* but sometimes without this protection. Those captives who fled from the assault were put to death. Thus, the captives had a choice of certain death at the hands of the Mongols or probable death at the hands of the defenders of the city, many of whom they may have known.

Besides catapults and battering rams, the Mongols also had the captives dig mines to sap or collapse the walls or even divert rivers or break dams to flood the city. In addition to using catapults and rams to demolish the walls, the Mongols also dug mines to



The fall of Baghdad to the Mongols in 1258, illustration from the *Jami al-Tawarikh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*) by Rashid al-Din, 14th century. Although the counterweight trebuchet was in use in the Middle East since the late 12th century, the Mongols would introduce it to East Asia. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

collapse walls. If a river ran near the city, then the Mongols, as they did in Xi Xia, would dam the river and flood the city.

Once the wall was breached, the Mongols then donned their armor and attacked in the middle of the night, usually gaining the ramparts by morning. As noted previously, the Mongols avoided hazardous conditions while the conscripted levies did most of the work, saving their own troops for the actual storming of the city.

While the Mongols' use of conscripts may seem cruel and onerous to say the least, from a military point of view, it remains pragmatic. Indeed, the Mongols used the local population as auxiliaries whenever possible, whether siege warfare or open combat. After losing a relatively high percentage of men through field battles and previous sieges, it made sense that the Mongols used as many local troops and levies as possible when attacking cities and fortresses.

Indeed, the use of local levies became standard operating procedure for the Mongols throughout their conquests. Regardless of their location, the Mongols arrived and then surrounded cities with walls before constructing built catapults, ladders, and other siege weapons. The campaign in Russia demonstrated quite effectively the sophistication and efficiency of Mongol siege warfare. The Mongols isolated the city by surrounding it with the wall. Then the city was battered into submission through the use of catapults, fire arrows, and of course levies with battering rams. When a breach in the city wall occurred, the Mongols stormed it quickly, but often at night to reduce casualties. Once the city fell, the Mongols then moved on to the next city.

As the sieges progressed, the Mongols became only more proficient. While some sieges lasted years, it was not uncommon for many to surrender prior to the Mongols' arrival. When done, the Mongols treated the population leniently. Any resistance, however, ensured complete destruction.

Timothy May

See also: *Military*: Baghdad, Siege of; Cannon; Gunpowder; Trebuchet; *Primary Documents*: Document 24; Document 25; Document 27; Document 46

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Subedei (1176–1248)

A preeminent Mongol general and strategist, Subedei was an Uriyangqai Mongol, a group today that is divided into two distinct groups, one consisting of primitive reindeer breeders and the other of largely Western Mongols now speaking an Oirat dialect.

Two groups divided along similar lines apparently existed in the 12th century as well, and Subedei is unquestionably to be associated with the ancestors of today's "Mongol" Uriyangqais. His family seems to have had long-term connections with the Onon-Kerulen Mongols stretching back long before the rise of Temujin. The Uriyangqais were among the earliest supporters of the young Mongol chieftain.

Subedei himself is first mentioned as entering Temujin's service as a "hostage"—that is, as a member of the khan's bodyguard—in 1203, but there is every evidence that he has a connection with Temujin long before that date, perhaps well over a decade before. In any case, by 1204 Subedei commanded 100 archers, perhaps drawn from his own people, and in 1206 he became the commander of a *mingan*, meaning "thousand." By that time Subedei was not only an important commander but was also recognized as one of the ferocious "Four Hounds" (*dorben noqas*) of Temujin, now Chinggis Khan.

Subedei was soon given even more important responsibilities, and in 1208 after a climactic battle on the Irtysh River led by Jochi against the Naiman and Merkit, survivors from the steppe wars of unification, Subedei was ordered to pursue those who still remained. One group, consisting of Merkit, fled into Uyghur domains in Turkistan and then into the realm of the Kara Khitai, seeking protection from the Kara-khitan *gurkhan*. Subedei, probably under the operational control of Jebe, another great Mongol general of the period, went after them. After securing the surrender of the Uyghurs in 1209, the two generals defeated the Merkit survivors on the Djem River. Still the pursuit continued, but Subedei was by this time acting on his own, since Jebe separated from him and went after another group of survivors, led by the Naiman chieftain Guchulug. But Guchulug was able to move far enough west to avoid Jebe and was ultimately able to overthrow the Kara Khitan Empire and establish his own empire in its place (1211). Outclassed and afraid of creating potential problems with new enemies, Jebe then withdrew and unified his forces with Subedei's once again. The two generals then continued after the surviving Merkit.

By this time the Merkit, still under Qudu, one of their original chieftains, had moved into Qangli domains and added Qangli tribesmen to their army. These combined forces Jebe and Subedei overtook and crushed completely, but before they could return to Mongolia they fought, in 1209 or perhaps early 1210, an accidental battle with the Khwarazmshah Muhammad II. The battle was a draw, and both armies withdrew. Subsequently, Subedei became a major participant in the Mongol assault on China, his armies ranging wide and far in Manchuria and elsewhere in the Jin Empire.

We then lose track of Subedei for several years. Perhaps he was sent west again, although he was not directly involved with the final suppression of Guchulug in 1218. After that date, he was caught up in the great Mongolian invasion of western Turkistan. This was in response to the massacre of merchants under Mongol protection by a deputy of the Khwarazmshah in that year. In the massive invasion that followed, Jebe and Subedei led the vanguard, and in 1220 they were sent in pursuit of a fleeing Khwarazmshah (d. late 1220). After the shah's death, Jebe, and after Jebe's death, Subedei alone carried out a famous reconnaissance in force around the Caspian Sea, from northern Iran to the south Russian steppe, one of the most impressive campaigns in

HOUNDS, STEEDS, AND PALADINS

In his rise to power, Chinggis Khan had an excellent eye for talent. Although respectful of social status, he did not let it prevent the truly talented from rising through the ranks. Most of his top generals came from nonaristocratic families. These included Subedei and Jebe.

Eight of Chinggis's generals gained special favor and were either called the Hounds (Noqas or Nogas) or Steeds (Kulu'ud). The Dorben Noqas (Four Hounds) were Jebe, Subedei, Jelme, and Khubilai (not Khubilai Khan), while the Dorben Kulu'ud (Four Steeds) consisted of Muqali, Bo'orchu, Boroghul, and Chila'un. All eight of them along with Shigi Qutuqtu comprised his Yisun Orluk (Nine Paladins).

Generally speaking, the Hounds and Steeds were grouped together as tactical units for battles such as at the Battle of Chakirmaut. After the *quriltai* of 1206, these Paladins ascended to the top of the new hierarchy. Not only did they command *tumed*, but they also held ranks in the governing of the empire. Whether as a Hound, a Steed, or a Paladin, these individuals entered Mongolian lore as legends.

history. Nothing like it had ever been attempted, nor was the advance subsequently repeated. During this campaign, Jebe and Subedei first encountered and defeated the Russians (and their Kipchak allies) in the Battle of the Kalka River (May 1223).

After linking up with Jochi, who had received control of the peoples and pastures in this extreme western part of the Mongol Empire, Subedei ultimately returned to China, where he took part in the final Mongol assault on Xi Xia and then, under khan Ogodei (1229–1241), the final assault on the surviving portions of the Jin Empire. It was finally destroyed in 1234 after the suicide of the last Jin ruler.

So far Subedei had had a distinguished career, but the best was yet to come, and between 1237 and 1241 he provided strategic directions for Mongol armies advancing into the Volga area and from there in Russia and, after a pause in 1239 and a campaign against the Kipchaks, a final advance into Russia, which resulted in the taking of Kiev on December 6, 1240. From there, still under Subedei's overall direction, although Batu, son of Jochi, was in nominal control, the Mongols launched a major invasion of Eastern Europe along five major lines of advance, with the ultimate goal being Hungary. Although heavier than anticipated losses resulted in Hungary due to the military ineptitude of Batu, the campaign as a whole was a stunning success. Again, nothing like it had ever been attempted, and nothing like it was again attempted until 1945.

After this success Subedei returned to Mongolia, where he died in 1248. Without his exceptional tactical and strategic skills, the history of the era might have been quite different for the Mongols.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Individuals:* Batu; Jochi; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; Merkit; Naiman; *Key Events:* Europe, Invasion of; Jin Empire, Fall of the; *Military:* Irtysh River, Battle of the; Kalka River, Battle of the; Mohi, Battle of; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Kara Khitai

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Tactics

Prior to any campaign, the Mongols met in a *quriltai* and planned their attack, including targets, based on gathered intelligence and who would participate. A schedule was made for the key locations. This permitted generals to have flexibility in their actions while also ensuring that the invasion was coordinated. Although the commanders took separate routes, the scheduled attacks brought the several armies together for a concentrated attack on key locations. Otherwise, smaller armies roamed the countryside in seemingly, but misleadingly, uncoordinated raids. While the Mongol armies could fight united, they used the same tactics, many of which had been honed for centuries among the steppe nomads, while others appear to have been new innovations.

Mongol raids, often stretching across hundreds of miles, were actually part of a massive *nerge* maneuver. The *nerge* (pronounced *ner-ge*) was based a mass hunting technique in which the Mongols fanned out over several miles, forming a circle. Gradually this circle would close and contract until all of the animals were trapped within this ring of men and horses. After the khan killed a few animals, others would begin their hunt. Some animals were intentionally allowed to escape. A hunt of this size naturally required excellent communication as well as discipline to maintain the circle in addition to preventing animals from escaping prior to being slain. While the hunting aspect was important, the training aspect and refinement of the technique extended past the needs of hunting, requiring a higher level of organization and discipline.

The Mongols were not the only Inner Asian group that considered hunting a valuable technique in military training. The Khitans used hunting not only for the practical purpose of feeding their troops but also as training for military maneuvers. The experience gave them, like the Mongols, the ability to function as a single unit on the battlefield.

Certainly the *nerge* contributed to a well-disciplined force capable of complex maneuvers over a broad front. The fact that the Mongols also became competent horsemen and archers due to daily exposure almost from birth is also undeniable. In addition, the seasonal migrations of the nomads also enhanced their discipline, as did the practice of coordinated moves across great distances, which assisted the Mongols in maintaining widely separated columns that kept in touch through scouts and messengers. As the *nerge* contracted, it drove people into either a core city or toward an enemy's field army. When the Mongols did encounter the field army, they attempted to

encircle it. This was often possible through the use of the *nerge*, with the encirclement beginning days before the actual battle began. As a result, the enemy often discovered that they were surrounded before they could do anything to counter it.

When battle occurred, the primary Mongol force engaged the enemy by attempting flanking maneuvers. Here they employed the *shi'uchi* (chisel) tactic, which was similar to the 16th-century European *caracole* tactic. Riders in files advanced and shot their bows at the target before wheeling around to return to their file. Discipline was necessary to ensure that the riders did not get too close to the enemy and were also able to turn their horses in the same direction. Failure to do so risked collision and thus hampering the execution of the tactic. The *shi'uchi*, as a basic tactic, was introduced at the Battle of Chakirmaut (1204) against the Naiman. From this formation and tactic, the Mongols could then maneuver into other tactics, such as a feigned retreat, known as *noqai kerel*, or dog fighting (as in a dog turning its head back to bite) or Parthian shot, so-called from the Battle of Carrhae 53 BCE where the Parthians shot backward at the Romans. Combined, they assisted in encircling the enemy. The steady rain of arrows from the *shi'uchi* attack meant that the Mongol warriors rode tantalizingly close to the enemy ranks, which often coerced the enemy to charge. The Mongols then retreated while also using the *noqai kerel*. As the Mongol armies retreated and the enemy followed, other units began to attack the flanks or the rear of the enemy.

The Mongols also used so-called kill zones. In this tactic, the Mongols shot their arrows into designated areas rather than at specific targets. This permitted a steady rain of arrows that hampered movement and also increased the penetration power of the Mongol bow, as the arrows were shot at a higher arc. The Mongols also practiced as part of their training trying to shoot arrows into leather circles or tubes set up on the ground, unlike most archer contests in which the goal was to hit the bull's eye.

The Mongols also practiced Fabian tactics in which they did not directly attack an enemy, particularly one with a strong position. In their Fabian tactics, the Mongols remained in view and occasionally skirmished, again using the *shi'uchi* tactic. However, they did not commit to the attack. Their primary motive was to either lure the enemy from their position through attacks, to delay them, or to set the enemy up for another Mongol force. At the same time, the Mongols also maintained a presence so that the enemy could not be reinforced or could not reinforce another army or threaten them.

Timothy May

See also: *Military*: Chakirmaut, Battle of; Decimal Organization; Siege Warfare; Weapons; *Primary Documents*: Document 14

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Tamma

The *tanma* or *tamma* (Mongolian) was a nomadic military force usually stationed on the frontiers of the empire. The word *tanma* comes from the Turkic *tan*, meaning “know” or “govern,” with the ending *ma*, making it a noun; the term was applied to the nomadic garrison forces that the Mongols established in connection with various regions, nearly all sedentary, occupied by them. Such forces were centered on nomadic elements, and in the case of China were first the commander Muqali’s original myriarchy previously formed in Mongolia. This is why in China, for example, the *tamma* was established in an area, now called Inner Mongolia, suited to a traditional nomadic life. Later, such *tamma* came to include sedentary troops as well, such as the many Onggud assigned to the *tamma* in China when it was first organized in 1217 or 1218. Associated with the *tamma* but not a part of it directly were various local forces, these including warlord armies in the case of China. Such warlord armies, called *cheriks* (armies) in Iran, came to substantially outnumber the *tamma* forces proper but did not consist of horsemen. As a result, the *cheriks* were a great deal less effective, although they had the advantage that they could garrison cities and other key points in ways that nomadic forces could not.

The original intent in the establishment of such forces seems to have been the creation of kernel tribal federations that could bring new groups on the fringes of the Mongolian world into the existing imperial tribal federation as new branches. In this sense *tamma* forces initially dominated the conquered areas such as northern China, allying with existing nomadic groups where possible, but later a formal administrative structure came into existence too. In the case of Mongol China this was based in the old Jin capital of Zhongdu, a new regional capital. Nonetheless, despite the growing importance of proper, sedentary authorities, the *tamma* continued to exist more or less as such down to the end of Mongol rule and beyond.

In the case of China, when the *tamma* was first organized there it was assigned to the Jalayir Mongol Muqali (d. 1223), known as *guowang* (prince of the dynasty). He was given a force of 10,000 Onggud, 1,000 assorted troops, 4,000 Ur’ud, 2,000 Ikires, 1,000 Mangqud, 3,000 Onggirad, 2,000 Jalayir, and various Khitan and Jurchen fighters—in some sources even Tangut warriors. Of these groups, the Ur’ud, Ikires, Mangqud, Onggirad, and Jalayir, here totaling 12,000, were part of Muqali’s original myriarchy commanded by him in Mongolia before the general advance and moved to occupy Inner Mongolia. At the time, what is now Inner Mongolia was a culturally mixed area not only inhabited by diverse groups such as the Turkic-speaking Onggud, or Khitan and Tangut, but also showing a mix of pastoral and sedentary culture. The area was then dotted by small agricultural communities pushed far out into what is now the steppe.

Of the original *tamma* force, the 1,000 assorted troops also came from Mongolia but were probably newly added to Muqali’s forces when the *tamma* was first created for China. They were the soldiers from which advanced scouts, called *alginchin*, were recruited. Unlike the *tamma* as a whole, the *alginchin* were actually stationed in the conquered domains. The plan was that such forces, organized in groups of 100 or so,

would constitute a reaction force, nomadizing in the sedentary areas in waste areas, one force well poised to detect the slightest opposition. When this happened the main *tamma* armies could be called in quickly.

Finally, the Onggud and the other similar forces represented surrendered groups, most of them becoming part of Mongol armies during a great uprising of 1207 affecting primarily Khitan. The Khitan troops were organized as special tribal auxiliary forces, *juyin* armies, the term harkening back to Liao times (the word is from Khitan). Chinggis Khan himself may have once been part of such a force.

Once established—and similar forces were established in the Mongol west, including some troops specifically referred to as *tammachi*, in this case meaning members of a *tamma*, on the Seljuk-Iranian border—Muqali's army became the main reaction force for occupied China unless a general campaign was in the works, in which case the *tamma* was only one of the forces involved. In this connection, the *tamma* was particularly important during the period when Chinggis Khan was campaigning against the Khwarazmshah in Khurasan, Mawarannahr, and later Afghanistan and Iran. During that period it was the only large Mongol force in the east. After Muqali's death in 1223 his son Bol took over, and after Bol's death his son Tas or Chila'un (meaning "stone" in Turkic and Mongolian, respectively). Later Antung (1245–1293), son of the younger brother of Tas, became a very important person in Khubilai Khan's China, rising to very high rank before dying prematurely at age 48.

In terms of subsequent history, when China was largely pacified, although *tamma* armies were mobilized against the Jin and the Song, the Inner Mongolian *tamma* was most significant as the main demographic source of those groups later becoming the Eastern Mongols, who remained in China after 1368. Their descendants still live in the area today. Muqali's Onggirad were also important for providing the preferred marital partners of members of the Mongol ruling house and other favored parties in Mongol China.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Khurasan; Muqali; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; *Juyin;* Onggirad; Onggud; Tangut; *Military:* *Alginchi;* *Cherik;* *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Zhongdu

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Trebuchet

Until the advent of siege cannons, the trebuchet was the preeminent siege weapon of the medieval period. Although the term “trebuchet” has become synonymous with the counterweight variety so often depicted in movies, there were other varieties. In the Mongol Empire the counterweight trebuchet eventually became the preferred weapon, but the earliest trebuchets were of different varieties.

Prior to the counterweight trebuchet, most missile-hurling siege weapons consisted of torsion-based systems or traction devices. Torsion-based mangonels, commonly referred to as catapults, relied on a lever being pulled taut by a system of ropes and a winch. The ropes stored energy, which when released propelled the lever forward, hurling a missile. Traction-based weapons relied on a lever or swing beam attached to a fulcrum system on a raised platform. The swing beam was placed on the fulcrum unevenly. The swing beam or level often had a sling on the end or a platform or scoop that held the missile. The missile was launched by a team of men, ranging from a dozen or so to over 100, pulling ropes attached to the short end of the swing beam. By pulling the ropes the beam was raised, and the missile was launched at the apex of its arc. For great



Prior to counterweight trebuchets acquired in the Middle East, most siege weapons were powered by men pulling ropes, or by torsion-based engines. This miniature depicts a mangonel devised by Nicholas Polo, his brother, and his son, for the siege of Saianfu or Xingyang, ca. 1340. (The British Library)

range or a heavier missile, more men were added to the artillery crew. This became known as the traction trebuchet.

The traction trebuchet had been in use in China since the fourth century BCE and was still in use when the Mongols invaded Xi Xia and the Jin Empire. Jin deserters introduced the weapon to the Mongols. They were also in use in the West. They varied in size and power from antipersonnel weapons to engines of destruction. Unfortunately, due to the reliance on manpower, their range was limited. At times they had to be set up within bowshot range of their targets, making their crews vulnerable to the enemy. The Mongols, however, tended to staff their crews with “volunteers” who were rounded up from the countryside. They were guided in their duties by a proper artilleryman, while Mongol soldiers ensured that they did their duties. It is uncertain how rapidly these could fire, but it is estimated that two traction trebuchets used at the siege of Lisbon in 1147 fired 5,000 missiles in a span of 10 hours—a rate of 1 missile every 14.5 seconds. Each trebuchet used a team of 100 pullers. By replacing the crews on a regular basis, a high rate of barrage could be maintained.

It is believed that the counterweight trebuchet developed in the eastern Mediterranean region during the crusades of the 12th century. It is unknown who developed it or whether it was a Byzantine, Islamic, or Frankish invention, although the first known siege that used one was the Byzantine siege in 1165. The issue is further complicated, as a new name did not develop for some time. In Western sources “mangonel” was common, while Islamic sources (both Arabic and Persian) used *manjaniq*. This did not distinguish it from other weapons such as torsion-based mangonels, in which energy was stored in ropes that were twisted back by a winch, or traction trebuchets, which were powered by men pulling ropes, although these had fallen out of favor in much of Europe.

The weapon did not arrive in East Asia until the reign of Khubilai Khan. Stymied by the fortress city of Xiangyang, Khubilai had engineers sent from the Il-Khanate to assist in the siege. The Muslim engineers who came to China built counterweight trebuchets for the assault on Xiangyang, although Marco Polo attempted to take credit for the weapon’s introduction. Nonetheless, it is clear from the Chinese name for the weapon that its origin in China was due to Muslim influence, as it was known as an “Islamic throwing machine.” This was the so-called western trebuchet (*manjaniq maghribi*), a counterweight trebuchet with a winch attached to the frame. These could hurl rocks weighing from 110 to 661 pounds (50 to 300 kilograms). While the machines could hurl any chunk of debris, professional artillerymen preferred manufactured missiles—stone balls, carved and smoothed to assist in greater range and accuracy. It is known that counterweight trebuchets could launch missiles weighing between 99 and 198 pounds (45 and 90 kilograms) to a distance of 328 yards (300 meters).

Older fortifications could not withstand the bombardment from the powerful counterweight trebuchets, particularly when they were grouped into batteries, as the Mongols often did. Aleppo, which never fell to repeated crusader attacks, succumbed to the Mongols after five days. While the groups of trebuchets were in use prior to the Mongols, the use of large numbers (more than 10) appears to have been a Mongol innovation, although the evidence is inconclusive. What is notable, however, is that the

Mamluks used batteries of trebuchets on repeated occasions, with a high point being at the siege of Acre in 1291, where the Mamluks used 92 trebuchets. Prior to the Mongols there is little evidence that such large numbers of trebuchets were used anywhere. All evidence suggests that the Mongols learned to use mass numbers of trebuchets (traction types) during their wars with the Jin Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks; *Military:* Cannon; Siege Warfare; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Xiangyang, Siege of; Xi Xia; *Primary Documents:* Document 24; Document 25; Document 27; Document 46

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Tsunami Strategy

The tsunami strategy was a Mongol method of warfare used to conquer territory without overextending their armies. Although the Mongols created the largest contiguous empire in history, it is important to understand the process by which they incorporated territory into their empire. Through this it becomes clear that the Mongols possessed a standard strategy initiated during the reign of Ogodei, although antecedents clearly exist from the period of Chinggis Khan in which they invaded a region and caused considerable devastation. The Mongols, however, only intended to keep a small portion of the area they invaded while establishing a military force known as a *tamma* in this new borderland. Scholars have termed this conquest strategy as “tsunami strategy,” but it is unknown how the Mongols referred to it.

In its simplest explanation, the tsunami strategy meant that the Mongols invaded a neighboring area and devastated a large region, but then their armies receded back into the empire while they retained only a relatively small portion of the invaded region. Of course, the strategy was more complex than that, consisting of a set number of steps.

The first step involved the gathering of complete intelligence on the enemy before the invasion was made or even before war was declared. This intelligence originated from earlier raids, diplomatic missions, and reports from merchants and other travelers. The next step was planning the campaign based on the gathered intelligence. This planning was essential, as the Mongol military commanders ultimately operated on a very rigid time schedule. The operations to be enacted were based on this schedule. Although the independent commanders acted according to their own decisions, they still operated within the confines of the master schedule. Thus, columns separated

hundreds of miles apart could still rendezvous against strongholds. These rendezvous points were decided at a *quriltai*, or congress, at the same time that the armies were called up.

The next event was the invasion, which usually began with the Mongols striking at one point. This was the crashing of the wave. After this, the armies divided and created havoc on a widespread front. Eventually the armies converged upon a predesignated region. This often appeared as if the Mongols were retreating. In reality, this was the ebb of the tide before it flowed back into those regions. By striking in many columns, the Mongols prevented their opponents from unifying, as each noble needed his own forces to defend his own locality. Thus, he could not risk assisting anyone else, allowing the main Mongol force to concentrate on the prime target. Meanwhile, the surrounding regions were devastated. Again, the local forces remained on the defensive. This method of invasion also confused the defenders. Often, while the defenders thought that they were being attacked, the Mongols suddenly retreated. The Mongols did not conquer all of the areas their forces invaded; however, they withdrew to a now stabilized and conquered area. Thus, the Mongols did not make sweeping conquests in which they gained vast amounts of territory; instead, they slowly and steadily incorporated territory into the empire. Once a small amount of territory was firmly in their control, they moved into the next land, which was already weakened. Therefore, the Mongols appeared to have conquered rapidly, but it was because they had already undermined the defense of the next area.

The development of the tsunami strategy was gradual, as demonstrated against the Jin Empire. In his initial invasions, Chinggis Khan demonstrated little interest in conquering territory; he was more interested in pillaging and then withdrawing to Mongolia. Only gradually did he retain territory and then decide to conquer the Jin Empire in its entirety. The destruction of the Khwarazmian Empire put the tsunami strategy on full display. Despite conquering Khursan and beyond, the Mongols retained only Mawarannah. During the Western Campaign, or the invasion of Europe, the Mongols destroyed the military capacity of Poland and Hungary and then withdrew. Their intent was not to remain in Hungary or Poland but rather to consolidate their gains in the Kipchak steppes and among the Rus'. Chormaqan's conquests of Iran and Transcaucasia are another example of the success of the strategy.

The key to the success of the tsunami strategy was the transition from military rule to civilian rule. Based on Mongol activities in Iran and China, a pattern of transition from military to civil government occurred. The *mingan* (unit of 1,000) was the basic unit of organization in the early Mongol government, used for both taxes and military levies. Over time, this changed as the empire expanded and became increasingly complex. Also instrumental were the *tamma* units that resided on the frontier of the empire, usually in newly conquered lands. They were the main instrument of incorporating and holding territory for the Mongol Empire and often stayed at their posts for several years. If possible, the *tamma* units were also used to expand the empire into bordering territories. When territory was gained, the *tammias* were inevitably the force that held the newly conquered land, allowing the rest of the army to return to their pastures.

As a result, the Mongol military was not bogged down in garrisons and maintained its mobility. The destruction caused by the Mongols along the frontier deterred attacks and rebellions but also eroded the military capability of the Mongols' neighbors. This in turn allowed them to exert power and influence. There was a transfer of authority from the military governor to the civilian that often was tense, but nonetheless it allowed for the gradual expansion of the Mongol Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration: Tammachi; Key Events: Europe, Invasion of; Military: Chormaqan Noyan; Tactics; Tamma; Key Places: Jin Empire; Khwarazmian Empire*

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Weapons

The Mongols fought with a wide range of weapons, including bows, swords, lances and spears, axes, and maces. While other weapons such as halberds occasionally appeared, those five were the most common among the Mongol warriors.

The primary weapon used by the nomads on the steppe throughout history, and perfected during the Mongol Empire, has been the composite bow. As the name implies, the composite bow was made from a variety of materials that provided a rigid structure, which once bent and strung had an immense amount of energy and allowed for a greater range and penetrating power than self-bows. Only the Welsh longbow could rival it. Unstrung, the composite bow resembled the letter “C,” but once strung, the bow consisted of two curves, one above and one below the handle. Due to this, the composite bow was also referred to as a recurved or double recurved bow. The recurved shape assisted in providing the power of the bow and allowed it to be shorter than self-bows with similar drawing power. The size of the bow was of great importance to the nomadic warrior, as he was primarily a horse archer. A large bow hampered his shooting arc, or how easily the archer could turn, on horseback. Indeed, anything larger than four feet was unwieldy. The Mongols and other nomads often carried their bow in a quiver or holster on their hip, allowing them easy access to the weapon whether mounted or dismounted.

The construction of the bow was a complicated process that required several months to even two years to make due to the curing process. The bow's grip was usually made from hardwood, while the arms of the bow were layers of wood and horn glued and held together with sinew while it dried. Wood or bone pieces with notches cut in them were placed at the tip to hold the bowstring. The string itself varied in materials and



The composite bow was the preferred weapon for a horse archer. With the quiver on the hip of the rider and fitting the arrow on the right side of the bow, the horse archer could shoot rapidly. This Persian miniature of a Mongol horseman with a composite bow is from the 13th century. (Pictures from History/Bridgeman Images)

could be made of animal sinew, hair, or even silk strings. Once constructed, the bow was covered with a waterproof lacquer, which occasionally needed renewed application, to protect it against dampness. Even this was not complete protection, as humid weather affected the elasticity of the bow and lessened its effectiveness.

Normally, the composite bow had a range of about 984 feet (300 meters). At this range, however, arrows had less penetrating power but could still be useful for harassing an enemy. Most shooting occurred between 164 and 328 feet (50 and 100 meters), whereby an arrow shot by a Mongol warrior could easily penetrate chain mail armor. The Mongols, like other steppe nomads and many Asian societies, also drew the bow differently due to the bow's power. In Europe and the Mediterranean world, the Mediterranean or Western release was used in which the string is drawn by the three fingers between the thumb and pinky. The nomads used their index finger and the thumb. A thumb ring mitigated the stress on the thumb and also prevented the string from cutting into flesh while aiming.

Arrow shafts were made from willow and birch wood or reeds. The Mongols used a wide variety of arrowheads in both style and material. Even in the 13th century bone, bronze, iron, and even wood arrowheads were used, although iron and steel heads became more common. The arrowheads included trilobed blades for narrow armor

piercing as well as square and rounded blades intended for horses or to leave gaping holes. Whistling arrowheads were also used for signaling purposes.

In regard to swords, the Mongol *ild* (sword) was a saber. Although the Turks introduced the saber to the Middle East, the Mongol presence cemented the weapon as the ideal cavalry weapon. The curve in the blade made it the ideal weapon for mounted warfare, as it allowed the rider to slash and pull the weapon out of the body more easily than a straight blade, which was common in the Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia prior to the coming of the nomads.

The Mongols' lances and spears often had a hook on the shaft near the blade, which allowed the Mongols to drag riders from horses when necessary. The ethnic Mongols tended to be horse archers, and while some did use lances, those who functioned as heavy cavalry tended to be non-Mongols such as Khitan, Jurchen, and Alans and others who possessed a style of warfare more accustomed to shock tactics.

Other common weapons were maces and axes, which were easily manufactured and accessible. Furthermore, both weapons were functional from horseback and could cause blunt-force trauma even against armored opponents. Also, the weapons generally required less skill than the saber to use effectively.

Although Mongol warriors usually provided their own weapons, the empire did establish armories and purchased weapons from bowyers and smiths. Initially Mongol weapons tended to be of adequate quality, which only increased as the Mongols expanded. Although much of their weaponry came from sedentary manufacturers, the fact that the Mongol arrowheads and saber were distinct from Chinese weapons indicates that arms manufacturing was fairly widespread in Mongolia prior to the conquest even though it may not have met all of the needs of the nomads. Itinerant blacksmiths existed in the steppes and fulfilled the needs to the best of their ability; however, lack of proper facilities and fuel hampered large-scale production until the formation of the empire. Once the empire was established, the Mongols not only could assemble the natural resources but also could draw upon skilled artisans to form a true military-industrial complex.

Timothy May

See also: *Military:* Armor; Siege Warfare; Tactics; *Objects and Artifacts:* Horse

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OBJECTS AND ARTIFACTS

OVERVIEW ESSAY

History is often conceived of in terms of people, places, and events. Objects, however, have always played an important if often underappreciated role in history. No matter how ubiquitous, objects such as clothing, books, and even food have shaped history in various manners. In some instances, objects help shape the culture and define gender roles or divisions between social classes as well as help define daily life in any society. In other instances, they provide not only the cultural framework of a society but the intellectual structure as well. In the Mongol Empire, objects from across Eurasia played a role in shaping the history of the empire and our understanding of it. Because the empire began in the nomadic culture of the steppes, items from nomadic society had the most instrumental influence on the Mongols.

Because the foundation of the Mongol Empire was based on pastoral nomadism, five particular objects are of the utmost importance: horses, sheep, goats, oxen/yaks, and camels. Collectively, these were known as the Five Snouts. They made pastoral nomadic life in the steppes of Inner Asia possible. The combination of animals made it possible for the nomads to survive in the varying ecologies of Inner Asia, from pure steppe to semidesert and desert to the mountains and forested areas. The mix of animals was adjusted according to the region. Furthermore, each animal provided a different function in the life of the nomad.

The horse was the most important animal because it not only provided the means to herd the other animals but was also the basis for the Mongol military machine. The tough yet small Mongol horse (14 hands tall at the shoulder) was only occasionally eaten, but it also provided food through mare's milk. Although mare's milk could be drunk in its natural form, the Mongols and other nomads preferred it in its fermented form, known as *airag* (kumiss). The Mongols encountered various other alcoholic beverages, but kumiss remained their preferred drink and symbolized for Mongols the nomadic life. It was used at court ceremonies and even flicked to propitiate spirits during religious ceremonies, but it was drunk by even the most ordinary herdsman. While kumiss was not reserved for the elite, the Mongol khans often had herds of mares whose primary function was to provide kumiss for the khan's consumption.

The sheep followed the horse in importance because it provided not only meat but also wool that could be transformed into felt for clothing and shelter. Felt from the sheep also provided material for the tents of the Mongols, known as *ger* in Mongolian but more popularly known today by a Turkic word "yurt." The yurt could be easily

dismantled and loaded on draft animals and transported to the next pasture. Yurts belonging to the nobility, however, were transported on wagons pulled by oxen. The oxen, or yaks at higher elevations, were primarily used as draft animals but also provided meat and dairy products in addition to leather.

Goats also were of great importance in the more marginal grazing lands of the steppes. Camels were also highly priced as draft animals and for their wool, but due to their low reproduction rate they always comprised a smaller portion of any nomad's herd. All of the animals provided dung, which when dried served as fuel for campfires.

Animal products from the Five Snouts were also important for the production of clothing in Mongolian society. Felt was used for clothing as well as for lining boots and other garments. Additionally, the hair from goats and camels was used for the production of warm clothing, including blankets. Leather from the Five Snouts was used not only for clothing but also to make other necessities, such as armor, chests, water vessels, and bags and pouches of various sorts. As their empire expanded, the Mongols incorporated other materials, such as silk, into their clothing and artifacts. Robes made from silk, particularly those incorporating thread wrapped with filaments of gold, known as *nasij*, became among the most important prestige garments. Such robes were given as gifts to dignitaries and as awards to the most favored of officials.

While much of the silk and other luxury goods were initially acquired through pillaging and plundering, the purchasing of goods was equally important. For the Mongol Empire, money took varying forms due to the size of the empire, which encompassed many geographic regions that rarely had direct contact with each other. Although the empire never instituted a single monetary system, during the Yeke Monggol Ulus period, after the dissolution of the empire, efforts were made in the khanates to do so. The Yuan Empire was particularly successful in implementing paper money, which is now used across the globe. During the period of the Mongol Empire, paper money was still largely a novelty but gradually gained acceptance. It did not, however, experience success outside of the Yuan Empire. Efforts by the Il-Khanate to institute its use were an abject failure.

In most parts of the empire silver reigned supreme, and there were efforts by the Mongols to unify the coinage of the empire. Even after the dissolution of the Mongol Empire, the weight of the coin remained fairly standard even if the mint varied from khanate to khanate. Yet, paper money and silver coins were not alone. Furs remained important as a method of paying taxes, and cowrie shells remained acceptable in various regions of the empire.

As with all cultures, religion played a vital role in Mongolian and nomadic society. While Christianity (via the Church of the East or Nestorian Christianity), Islam, and Buddhism had penetrated the steppes of Mongolia, the Mongols tended to be polytheists. They did, however, possess one god who was above the others, and that was Tenggeri. While *tenggeri* was the generic term for a deity, its use typically referred to the Koke Mongke Tenggeri (Blue Eternal Sky), or heaven, a sky god venerated by the Mongols. Although Tenggeri was respected and seen as all-powerful, ancestor worship was also practiced daily. Typically, every yurt contained an area that housed a few *onggons*.

An *onggon* was an object that housed the spirit of an ancestor. Most *onggons* were made of felt and cut or shaped into a human figure. Offerings were made to the *onggons* on a daily basis; such offerings were typically milk, kumiss, or food. The ancestral spirits (and other spirits in general) needed to be propitiated to maintain their favor and protection. Failure to do so could result in bad fortune, such as animals killed by such natural forces as a storm (brought on by the ire of the spiritual world), or even illness.

While illnesses brought on by spirits necessitated a shaman, the Mongols also developed a sophisticated medical system. As the Mongols conquered Eurasia, they encountered not only different cultures, civilizations, and religions but also different forms of medical practice. While the Mongols were experts in setting broken bones and also dealing with battle wounds, new forms of medical care, influenced by Buddhism, Chinese practices, and Galenic thought (via Islamic medicine) offered new venues for care. Some of these could also replace the need for a shaman, particularly as the Mongols converted to Islam and Buddhism. All of the medical practices could be found in a curious book known as *Yinshan zhengyao* (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink).

Yinshan zhengyao played the role of cookbook and medical manual. Although the book contained many recipes that suited Mongolian tastes, the recipes also held medical importance. As such, *Yinshan zhengyao* represented the Mongol Empire—the recipes suited the Mongol court but were influenced by Chinese medical sensibilities while containing ingredients from throughout the empire. Furthermore, there are sections and interpretations of Chinese medicine that are derived from Buddhist practices from India and Tibet as well as Galenic (Roman) medical theory that reached China through Muslim doctors.

While mutton was the preferred food of the Mongols, pasta is often associated with the Mongol Empire thanks to the enduring myth that Marco Polo brought pasta back with him from China. While it probably existed in Italy before Marco Polo, pasta itself may have originated with neither the Chinese nor the Italians but rather the Turks and became more widespread via the Mongol Empire.

In the popular mind the Mongol Empire is not typically associated with intellectual achievement, but this is an interpretation that only focuses on the Mongol conquests and destruction, an interpretation resulting from the fact that the victims, not the victors, wrote the history of the Mongol Empire. This is not quite accurate. The Mongol rulers, especially the queens, provided patronage for the arts as well as for countless scholars. While Rashid al-Din is perhaps the most famous beneficiary of the Mongol largess, which produced his *Jami'at al-Tawarikh* (Compendium of Chronicles), one of the earliest attempts at a true world history, several other histories were also sponsored by the Mongols.

One such work was *The Secret History of the Mongols*. It was “secret” because only the Mongol elites were permitted to read it. *The Secret History of the Mongols* provided not only the origins and rise of Chinggis Khan but also the history of the Mongols prior to the birth of the Mongol Empire. History, myth, and storytelling become intertwined so that for those unfamiliar with Mongol customs, it can be difficult to determine fact from fiction. While some scholars dismiss its importance, it is crucial because it reveals

much of the Mongol mind, particularly in terms of what aspects of their history were of the most importance to them.

Another work, which only survives in Chinese, is *Shengwu qinzheng lu* (The Campaigns of the Holy Warrior). This work concerns the campaigns of Chinggis Khan and Ogodei Khan. Although it is written in Chinese, it is in a Mongolian idiom and is quite unlike any Chinese history of the Mongols. Scholars believe that it was originally written in Mongolian or perhaps dictated in Mongolian. Through these two works, it is clear that the Mongols were very concerned with their achievements and with recording them for posterity. Indeed, *Shengwu qinzheng lu* became a major source for Rashid al-Din's own work. Thus, a Mongolian work influenced one of the greatest works written in the Persian language.

As with food, money, and medicine, the Mongol Empire also faced an issue with time. Within the empire a number of calendar systems existed. While the Mongols used a 12-animal calendar cycle, adopted from the Chinese, other calendars were in wide use throughout the empire. These included the Islamic Hijri calendar as well as other systems used by various ethnic and religious groups. Due to this, the dating of events in the sources can be quite perplexing because lunar and solar calendars rarely align easily, although today there are a number of web-based computer applications that make the conversion easy.

While the objects discussed above have been associated with the Mongol Empire, one additional item must be considered: the Great Wall of China. With a length of 5,500 miles, it was designed to protect China from the nomads to the north. Contrary to popular belief, it cannot be seen from the moon and certainly did not exist during the era of the Mongol Empire. Indeed, it was built almost 100 years after the Yuan Empire collapsed in China. So, questions of whether it was built to keep the Mongols out or the Chinese in (from escaping to the greater freedom of the steppes) do not apply. Nonetheless, the Great Wall has played a part in our understanding of the Mongol Empire even if it did not exist during the period. It has become a symbol that has been projected into the past to understand sedentary-nomadic relations as well as a straw man in the discussion of whether or not Marco Polo went to China. Perhaps the largest artifact to discuss, the Great Wall also amply demonstrates the role of objects in understanding history.

Calendar

Today we take the calendar for granted. It serves merely a utilitarian end and plays only an inconsequential role in our conception of government. In the Mongol Empire, however, as in the premodern world in general, the calendar served a practical purpose but also played an essential sacral role in the foundation of government. Whereas today our governments tend to be based on a written constitution, in the Mongol Empire and elsewhere in the past, governments were based on conformity with the ways of heaven, the observable sky. The government relied upon heaven to provide order over chaos

and ruled heaven with conventional systems of time and space so that heaven might be used to rule Earth in kind. It was the calendar that made manifest this interrelationship between heaven and Earth, thus its importance.

For the sake of utility, the Gregorian calendar, used throughout much of the world today, reflects only the position of the sun. Though a lunar calendar and other calendars are appended to it, the month does not indicate the position of the moon. In Inner Asia during the era of the Mongol Empire, knowing the phase and position of the moon was essential not only for keeping track of events but also for orientation and navigation. Calendars were designed to reflect in a given date the position of the sun and moon simultaneously. Doing so entailed considerable complexity, for the solar and lunar cycles are in all ways incommensurate. To keep them in sync, the cycles had to be regulated by various intercalary methods. In the way of complexity, note that the order derived from observation of the heavens is inevitably subjective to the observer, relative to the observer's location on Earth, and mutable over time. No celestial cycle is perfectly commensurate with any other, and any given cycle can be perceived in any number of ways. The day, for instance, can be perceived relative to the sun, moon, and stars and defined with respect to dawn, dusk, sunrise, sunset, noon, midnight, or what have you. This inherent conventionality to time reckoning lends itself to a multiplicity of systems even within a single government.

With the rise of their empire, the Mongols turned to the 12-animal cycle to mark the years. This they adopted from Uyghur tradition, itself borrowed from the Chinese system—well known throughout the world still today as beginning with the Year of the Rat. Precisely when the Mongols adopted the Uyghur system is uncertain. Its earliest attested date is found in *The Secret History of the Mongols*, where the Year of the Cock (*takiya jil*) marks the ascension of Chinggis Khan's rival, Jamuqa, to the position of *gurkan* in 1201. The date is intriguing, for it is also around this time that the Mongols enrolled Uyghur scribes to introduce their writing system. Song dynasty envoys to the Mongols remark that prior to this time the Mongols had no dating system whatsoever. These comments are perhaps made as hyperbole to show a general state of perceived barbarism. After all, the 12-animal cycle was widely used among peoples of the Mongolian plateau long before the rise of Chinggis Khan. Moreover, the 12-animal cycle found in *The Secret History of the Mongols* contains vestiges of what appears to be an indigenous Mongolian system. The Mongolian system, which names the months after terrestrial phenomena and animals, is preserved in full in various Sino-Mongolian vocabularies.

Prior to 1220, spoils from their campaign against the Jurchen Jin dynasty (1115–1234) had profited the Mongols with a number of well-learned slaves, a leading figure among them was the Khitan polymath Yelu Chucai (1189–1243). Yelu Chucai revised the Jurchen calendar *Daming li*, which the Mongols would subsequently use as an official calendar until 1280. In 1222 Yelu Chucai produced a new calendar, the name of which, *Gengwu*, was taken from the year of its epoch, retro-dated to 1210, the first year of the Mongol conquest in northern China. The calendar was never adopted officially, but Song envoys noted that it was used nevertheless. (The calendar is preserved in chapters 56–57 of the *Yuanshi*). Although the Mongols had assimilated the Chinese

sexagenary cycle, even after the ascendancy of Khubilai Khan in 1264 and the founding of the Yuan dynasty, the Mongols preferred the 12-animal system to date official documents written in their own language.

As the Mongols extended their empire across Eurasia, they brought their Sino-Uyghur calendar to the nations under their dominion. Far away in Mesopotamia the il-khan Hulegu (r. 1256–1265) used it to replace the Muslim Hijri calendar for purposes of civil administration (though the Hijri calendar continued to be used for Muslim religious observances). To give a few examples of what the change entailed, rather than beginning the day at sunset, it now began at midnight; the Sino-Uyghur calendar employs an intercalary month, which the solely lunar Hijri calendar strictly prohibits; rather than celebrating the New Year with the new moon coinciding with the vernal equinox, it was now celebrated roughly six weeks earlier with the new moon that coincided with the sun's passing through Aquarius; and rather than relying on the epoch of Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Medina (622 CE), the 12-animal cycle was used instead.

Khubilai Khan brought change to Inner Asian calendrical traditions as well. He brought in Muslim astronomers from the West and would eventually establish a Muslim Astronomy Bureau (Huihui sitian jian). In 1267 Khubilai's leading Muslim astronomer, Jamal al-Din, presented his emperor, Khubilai, with the *Wannian li*, a calendar based on Muslim systems but never officially adopted. In 1268, having adopted Buddhism as the state religion, Khubilai synchronized the Tibetan and Chinese calendars and, by way of advancing the Chinese New Year over the Tibetan, made the Month of the Tiger the first month of the year instead of that of the Rat.

Mongolian efforts to improve the calendar culminated with the completion of the *Shoushi li* (season-granting calendar). Perhaps the most accurate and sophisticated calendar in Chinese history to that point, the calendar was prepared by a team of Chinese scholars for the sake of governing all of China under a single system. The project, which entailed not only mathematical and technological precision but also the use of observatories and the taking of latitude coordinates throughout the empire, was being carried out even as the final campaign against the Song dynasty was under way. The project was

CALENDAR CONFUSION

As a year counter, the brevity of the 12-animal cycle creates ambiguity that tends to cause confusion over time. For example, the date of *The Secret History of the Mongols* is given as the Year of the Rat (*quluqana jil*), but whether that year corresponds to 1228, 1240, 1252, 1264, or some other year has proved difficult to ascertain. Less easy to confuse is a 60-term cycle used by the Uyghurs but again deriving from Chinese tradition. This sexagenary cycle, made up of two separate cycles, the 10 Heavenly Stems (Ch. *tiangan*) and the 12 Earthly Branches (*dizhi*), represents the years in binomial terms. Song dynasty envoys note that around 1220 the Mongols began to use the Chinese sexagenary system. Later documents show that they used the Uyghur variation of the system as well.

completed in 1280, and the calendar was promulgated in 1281. It would be used throughout the remainder of the Yuan dynasty and was carried over into the Ming and Qing dynasties as well.

Brian Baumann

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yelu Chucai; Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; Uyghurs; *Objects and Artifacts:* *The Secret History of the Mongols*

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Clothes

Since the prehistoric era, Mongolia has largely been a land of pastoral nomads. Living off of the Five Snouts—horses, cattle, sheep, goats, and Bactrian camels—the inhabitants of Mongolia have survived for centuries. Considering the climate of Mongolia, the primary concerns toward clothing have been on pragmatic reasons: functionality and warmth.

With an abundance of sheep, wool became the primary medium for clothing. Unlike other societies, wool was not developed into yarn or thread, as this would have required a spinning wheel or other cumbersome object that would then have to be packed and transported when the nomads moved. Instead, the nomads transformed the raw wool into felt. Wool consists of many scales at the microscopic level. When flattened these scales interlock, thus forming felt.

The felt can then be used in large sheets to cover the ubiquitous dwellings of the nomads, known as *gers* or *yurts*. It is also the basic item for clothing ranging from socks and the lining for boots. Trousers and shirts have also been fabricated from felt. Of course, felt can be a bit uncomfortable at times, particularly in warmer weather, so other materials have also been used. Silk, when available, has been used for both inner layers, next to the skin, and on the outside to present a more attractive appearance for the garment. Silk floss has often been used for insulation as well in many garments.

When furs have been used for clothing, the fur is usually turned to the inside to keep the individual warm, unlike Westerners who usually displayed the fur as a luxury item. For the nomads on the steppes, the use of fur was based on pragmatic purposes. Indeed, John of Plano Carpini, a Franciscan monk who journeyed to the Mongol court in the 13th century, commented that the Mongols wore the skins of any creature. In the harsh environment of the steppe, there was little reason to waste anything of use.



The primary garment of the Mongols of the 13th century has changed little from the *deel* that this man wears. Today it is the Mongolian national dress and includes pointed-toe boots. (Bartosz Hadyniak/iStockphoto.com)

many observers who had contact with pre-Chinggisid Mongolia remarked on this difference. Often the *deel* was insulated or layered to provide warmth. The nomads also used the long sleeves of their *deel* to keep their hands warm instead of wearing gloves or mittens. In warmer weather, men might wear it unfastened so that the right side of their body was exposed and cooler. Like boots and trousers, the *deel* is still worn today and remains a unisex article of clothing, although colors and decorations might vary. The *deel* saw some variation. During the war against the Song Empire, the heat and humidity were as much an enemy as the Song. Allegedly Chabi, Khubilai Khan's favorite wife, designed a new form of sleeveless *deel* for the Mongol warriors.

Trousers appear to be an invention by nomads, as trousers make riding horses easier and more comfortable than other garments. Furthermore, trousers provide better protection for the legs from thorns and branches as well as chafing. Boots also suited the nomadic life in providing protection and warmth for the feet. Over time, some boots developed an upturned toe that assisted in insulating the boot, as the pocket of air would warm from body heat and thus keep frostbite at bay in combination with felt socks. Traditional Mongolian boots are heelless and uniform in shape for both feet. The boots advance to about midcalf and are stiff, being made from leather and lined with layers of felt to protect against the cold. Meanwhile, on the foot one wears a thick quilted sock made from cotton or felt.

The upper body was protected by the *deel* (pronounced "dell"), or *degel* as it was pronounced in the 13th century. This was a long-sleeved robe or caftan that reached just below the knee. Among the Mongols it was fastened on the right. Evidence suggests that Turkic groups prior to the rise of the Mongols fastened it on the left;

HEADGEAR

Mongol headgear, excluding helmets, caused minor sensations in the medieval world. These ranged from fur-lined hats to brimless and then later ones with wide brims. The most common type was made from felt with an upturned brim and is typical of the type shown in portraits of Chinggis Khan, Ogodei, and Khubilai Khan. Similar hats were fur-lined and have been worn for centuries with a brim or flap that could also be pulled down to cover the ears and neck.

Traditionally, Mongolian hats were brimless. According to the sources, Chabi, Khubilai Khan's favorite wife, designed new headgear. With the Mongol advance southward and more intense exposure to the sun, the new brimmed hats gave relief to the Mongols. Many of the later Yuan emperors are depicted wearing them instead of the traditional style worn by Khubilai in his official portrait.

Among women, one piece of headgear was more vividly described than any other type by travelers, particularly from the west. This was the *boghta*. The *boghta* was approximately two feet tall and made with a wooden frame and birchbark and then covered with cloth. The average women would use felt, but the women of the nobility adorned their *boghtas* with red silk. This is displayed not only in the imperial portraits of the Yuan Empire but also in other Chinese and Persian artwork. Some *boghtas* became even taller and more ornate, using wire frames and adorning them with brocade cloth as well as *nasij*, or pearls. The hat was secured to the head with a fur hood and straps. The *boghta* conveyed status and was considered formal wear, which one would wear to ceremonial events such as court events but also at one's wedding.

There is some evidence that the *boghta* hats worn by the female Mongol elite gave rise to the conical "princess" hat of the European high medieval period. Mongol hats with brims and a peaked top also became the model in the European imagination for the headgear of witches and wizards.

The rise of the Mongol Empire in the 13th century with its capital at Karakorum in Central Mongolia had a significant impact on clothing. One factor was that the Mongols brought numerous artisans including weavers to their camps as well as to the Mongol capital of Karakorum in central Mongolia. While the style of garments did not change significantly, the materials became more luxurious. Silk was not the only cloth that became ubiquitous among the Mongol elite. Their love for the gold brocade known as *nasij* led to an increase in *nasij* production that in turn led to the movement of skilled weavers across Eurasia—much of it involuntarily. In addition, Mongol-style clothing became fashionable, particularly among courts where the ruler took a Mongol princess as a wife, such as Korea. Others adopted some aspects due to proximity to the Mongols, such as among the Rus' princes whose clothing began to include a caftan similar to the Mongol *deel*.

Other fashion influences included the transfer of decorative clothing and headgear. Mongol writing influenced decoration along the hems of clothes in much of Eurasia. The Phags-pa script introduced during the reign of Khubilai Khan, with its square-shaped

cursive letters, was imitated as a decorative form on dresses and robes among the elites beyond the Mongol Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Chabi Khatun; Khubilai Khan; *Objects and Artifacts:* Five Snouts; *Primary Documents:* Document 7; Document 18

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Five Snouts

Although nomadism varied across the globe, on the Mongolian steppe, pastoral nomadism was dependent on the Five Snouts, all of which were used not only as food sources but also for their by-products such as wool, hair, and leather. Horses, sheep, goats, cattle (including beef cows, yaks, and/or oxen), and camels comprised the Five Snouts. The exact composition of the nomad's herd varied, however, with the geography. These animals were more than just farm animals; they were also the nomad's wealth.

The primary animal was the horse. Without the horse, pastoral nomadism was impossible. Owing to this, the horse held an honored status not only as an animal but also as a symbol. Naturally, the horse was essential for herding all the other animals, but it was also important for hunting and warfare. While wealth was based on the number of animals one owned, the condition of one's horses was often indicative of one's social and economic status. In *The Secret History of the Mongols*, mention of a horse with little hair on its tail indicated dire poverty. Or one might state that one has no whip except for one's horse's tail. In Mongolia, spurs have never been used.

Sheep were the secondary animal of importance and were a necessity not only for their wool but also for their meat. Mutton was and remains the major source of protein for all of Mongolia. Goats supplemented this, particularly in areas where there is less pasture, such as in the mountains and near the Gobi Desert.

Cows and yaks came next, with their importance varying depending on the altitude. Compared to sheep, far fewer were kept, and beef was eaten less frequently, as cows served as draft animals. Yaks were used by herders who lived in the mountains and highlands at altitudes over 8,200 feet (2,500 meters). Another animal in use was the *khainag*, a yak-cow crossbreed that was well suited for altitudes between 5,250 feet

(1,600 meters) and 8,200 feet, as even Mongolian cattle can find these altitudes trying. While cattle supplemented the sheep and goat population, the incorporation of cattle into the herds of the nomad required careful management, as cattle and sheep do not graze in the same fashion. Cattle tend to eat grass higher up on the blade, while sheep nibble almost to the ground.

Camels of the two-humped Bactrian variety are the fifth animal, although not all nomads possessed camels. They were valued not only for their fat-rich milk but also for their wool. Additionally, camels were used as beasts of burden, capable of carrying, on average, 400 pounds or of pulling loaded carts of up to almost 950 pounds.

While not technically one of the Five Snouts, a nomad's encampment would be incomplete without a dog. Dogs tend to be very large and of mixed breeding. They were used as guard animals, capable of fending off wolves and people, and were not used for herding animals. Indeed, a long-held custom is that strangers do not approach the camp until the dog is restrained. The phrase *nokhoi khorio*, meaning "please restrain the dog," has become a casual way of saying hello. For valid reasons, even Chinggis Khan feared dogs as a child.

All of the animals provided services or products that made pastoral nomadism possible. Among the most important by-products was felt. Felt is made by taking the wool of the sheep and then pounding and crushing it together. As wool has microscopic scales, when it is pounded the scales interlock and form a compact layer. In addition to clothing, felt is then used as material for the nomad's shelter, known as a yurt (*ger* in Mongolian). These round shelters are made with a wooden latticework covered by felt. In cold weather, more layers of felt are added. When moving, the *gers* are easily disassembled and loaded onto camels and carts and transported to the next site. In the past, the *gers* were sometimes kept assembled and placed on platforms drawn by oxen, making them easily transportable.

Leather, of course, is made from all the animals' skins as well as from animals gained from hunting and is used in a wide variety of applications. In addition to felt and leather,

PUTTING THE HORSE TO PASTURE

Chinese sources confirm that the Mongols never fed their horses fodder, beans, or grain. The horses, however, were generally not allowed to graze while being ridden. Only after the horse had been unsaddled, tied, and cooled off and the animal's breathing had returned to normal was it allowed to roam free and graze. During the spring the Mongols allowed their horses to fatten, during which time the animals were ridden minimally. Once autumn arrived, the horses were allowed to graze for shorter durations so that they became leaner and harder and sweated less. The Mongols considered autumn as the best season for man and horse: from an invader's perspective, it had the further advantage of being harvest time among the sedentary states. This impacted sedentary states in two ways. The destruction of crops during raids or war could induce famine, and peasants tended to be reluctant to leave their fields during this time as well, thus reducing the number of troops who might be available to defend against invaders.

the nomads use other animal by-products for clothing production. Goat and camel hair is used in the production of cashmere and other garments.

In terms of diet, the nomads subsist primarily on dairy products. Although mutton dominates meals, meat from the other animals is used; camel meat tends to be eaten only in emergencies or if an animal dies. The reluctance to eat camels is due to their considerable value. Milk from all of the animals produces a variety of foodstuffs such as cheese, yogurt, and cheese curd. The cheese tends to be harder than forms with which Americans and Europeans are accustomed. During the era of the Mongol Empire, the Mongols were known for producing a powdered milk or paste, to which they added water in a container. They tied the container to their saddles, and the bouncing motion of the horse while riding served to blend the mixture into a suitable consistency. Today, this is not commonly made. And of course, the nomads were well known for their love of *airag* (kumiss), fermented mare's milk.

The use of the Five Snouts provided the pastoral nomads with not only a variety of animals but also a safety net. Conditions unsuitable for sheep often accommodated goats or camels or perhaps cattle. The arrangement permitted a flexibility, whereas reliance on a single animal risked catastrophic consequences.

Timothy May

See also: *Objects and Artifacts:* Kumiss; Yurt; *Primary Documents:* Document 16; Document 19

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Great Wall

The Great Wall of China is an imposing sight by any standard. The crenelated cut stone walls of the Great Wall are an iconic image seen in films and tourists' pictures. And indeed, that is what you will find near Beijing. The Great Wall, however, did not look like this when it was built. The reconstructed wall follows the foundations of a wall built during the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), which ruled China after the Yuan Empire. The Ming Empire built the wall as a defense against the Mongols. The pristine wall sections near Beijing are a 20th-century reconstruction meant to preserve the Great Wall as a historical and tourist site.

The wall was largely constructed of adobe bricks or tamped or pounded earth. This was a standard method of building long walls in China since the ancient period. To build it, a form or mold was made from lumber. Dirt was then poured into the form and then pounded until compact. Another layer was made by the same method until the

wall reached the desired height and thickness. It was a relatively inexpensive and effective method of building walls. When maintained properly, the wall would last for years.

To the popular imagination, the Great Wall of China is omnipresent in history and was first built during the Shang dynasty (ca. 1766–1122 BCE), whose history is shrouded in legend. History is different, however. Long walls were a common defense in ancient China, with several kingdoms building them during the Warring States period (403–221 BCE). One of the most notable achievements of the Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE), which unified much of China, was the construction of an immense wall along its northern borders to protect against the nomadic confederations to the north. Emperor Shi Huangdi (r. 221–210) incorporated many of the existing walls into his own. When the Ming built their wall, they followed the easiest and most logical path for a defensive work, as did earlier dynasties, but the walls of the Qin dynasty had long since disappeared by time of the Ming dynasty. Indeed, most of it had fallen into disrepair during the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE).

When the Mongols invaded the Jin Empire, a “Great” wall was not present to slow their advance. The Jin did construct walls with gates in certain mountain passes. Some additional long walls have been found, such as the Chinggis Khan Wall in southern Mongolia, but it is uncertain who built them or why they were built. In any case, the long walls were not common or desired by the Mongols. This also had an unintended effect of causing some to doubt that Marco Polo visited China, as he never mentioned the wall. Until the late 20th century, most people believed that the walls had a continuous history since the ancient period. Some doubters concluded that since Marco Polo did not mention the wall, it was because he was not there.

Yet, Polo couldn’t mention the walls because they didn’t exist in the Yuan era. Just as the Jin Empire did not build them, Khubilai Khan never saw a need for them either, even during the war with Ariq Boke. When the Ming assumed control of China, they also did not immediately build a wall.

Initially, the Ming were able to fend off attacks from the steppes. Oddly enough, the initiative to build the Great Wall began for the same reason that the Qin dynasty built its walls—to prevent the nomads from occupying the Ordos Loop (the bend in the northwestern section of the Huanghe River). The first section was built in 1473–1474 with adobe bricks, as the local Ming authorities realized that military victory alone was insufficient, as it was not permanent. As the wall initially slowed the raids from Mongolia, the government continued to expand it. While expensive, the wall became preferable to military action, which was inconclusive even in victory—the Mongols simply retreated and would strike another day—and less humiliating than tribute, essentially paying the Mongols not to attack. Construction continued into the late 16th century.

The wall did not deter the Mongols, however. While the wall provided protection for China, it hindered trade, as the nomads now had less access to the border markets. This then exacerbated their need for goods, leading to more attacks, which then led to more walls. The wall initially proved quite useful, as even if the Mongols penetrated its defenses, a good commander could then use it to trap the raiders, cutting off their escape, as occurred in 1482. Additionally, to man the Great Wall, the Ming stationed 1 million soldiers along the 5,500-mile length of the wall, often in farming colonies to

CAN THE GREAT WALL BE SEEN FROM SPACE? DON'T BELIEVE IT!

Contrary to popular opinion, the Great Wall of China cannot be seen from space. Whether one considers the 5,500 miles of the Ming Great Wall or the over 13,000 miles of wall that the current Chinese government claims for the Great Wall, it cannot be seen from space. The 13,000 number comes from recent archaeological finds and includes walls from earlier dynasties and even territories that were not part of China prior to the Qing Empire (1636–1911), such as in Manchuria where the walls were part of the defensive works of Koryo.

Regardless, the length of the wall does not matter. While it may be longer than many rivers, it still is not wider than the Amazon, Mississippi, or Nile Rivers, which also cannot be seen from space. In fact, no object on Earth can be seen from space without enhanced imaging.

So where did this myth arise? As Westerners became fascinated with the Great Wall in the early 20th century, some people, so amazed by the ruins, began to claim that it could be seen from the moon or even Mars. The myth was cemented by *Ripley's Believe It or Not!*, which published the claim that it could be seen from the moon in 1932—37 years before the first men, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, landed on the moon in 1969.

make them self-sufficient. Maintaining the wall was also expensive, and while much of it was built with adobe bricks, more of it was with the time-honored tamped-earth style. In many ways, it was a futile effort—the longer the wall, the more it stretched the Ming resources. Even when the wall acted as a force multiplier, the Mongols could still assemble larger armies than those defending the wall at a given point. As the Mongols assembled larger forces, once they bypassed the wall, the destruction was greater. In short, the reliance on the Great Wall drained finances and resources without accomplishing its ultimate goal—the protection of China. Furthermore, the reliance on walls made it difficult for the Ming dynasty to reverse course and examine other options (both diplomatic and military) to secure its northern borders.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Northern Yuan; *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; Oirat

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Horse

The Mongols owed much of their success to their horses, which were also a key component of nomadism. The horses were sturdy, strong, and raised in a harsh environment. Though small in stature (14 hands tall) compared with the warhorses of Europe or even horses used in the Middle East, the Mongol horse was exceedingly strong and was said to surpass all others in terms of endurance.

As steppe nomads, the Mongols possessed the resources to provide large numbers of remounts for their armies. Envoys from China, the Middle East, and Europe all noted that Mongolia had an abundance of grass and water and that the herds of the Mongols consisted of hundreds of thousands of animals. While individual soldiers supplied their own horses, the Mongol court also owned massive herds, as did individual princes. These provided horses for imperial needs. Additionally, horses were allotted to each *yam* (post station). It is unclear, however, to what extent the Mongols mobilized the herds or if they created a system of acquisition for military needs.

The sources vary in the number of horses that the Mongols required each soldier to take with them. An estimate of 5, however, is reasonable, as the numbers found in the sources range from 2 to a high of 18. Yet even supplying 5 horses was not a simple task. To provide one warrior with 5 battle-ready mounts, it was estimated that he had to have access to a herd of 30 horses.

In general, the Mongols preferred geldings for military use. They castrated the stallions around the age of four years, thus producing a full-grown but gentler horse yet mature enough for warfare. The Mongols often rode mares as well, for much the same reason, in addition to being able to use the mare's milk for rations.

If each soldier possessed a string of several horses, which grazed for their feeding requirements rather than eating fodder, this necessitated a constant source of pasture. Despite the need to graze, it does not appear to have impacted the Mongols' own readiness for combat or marching the following day. During campaigns, the Mongols often remained on horseback at night while they allowed the animal to graze.

The grazing could slow the Mongols' movements, but generally, they were only turned loose at night. Pasture, however, was never far from the Mongols' minds, and they also tried to secure adequate pastures as they moved whether on campaign or at leisure.

The need for pasture had strategic implications, particularly on whether the Mongol mode of warfare (or even way of life) could be successful in certain regions. Without sufficient pastureland, the Mongols could not station troops in regions such as Syria for an extended period of time before exhausting available resources.

For all of their resistance to harsh environmental conditions, the resilient horses of the Mongols also underwent intensive training so that they not only gained incredible endurance but also were docile and followed a rider's commands easily. It was believed that one could ride one of these horses into battle and it would not be exhausted for 8 or 10 days, even in conditions where food and water were insufficient. This, of course, is an exaggeration but illustrates the perception that the stamina of Mongol



In the hot and humid climate of south China and Yunnan, the Mongols would loosen their *deels* in order to stay cool, as depicted in this Ming dynasty painting of a Mongol archer on horseback. Many Mongols remained in China after the Yuan abandoned it in 1368. (Victoria & Albert Museum/Bridgeman Images)

TRAINING THE HORSE

To prepare the horse properly, the Mongols rode their horses every day for 30 *li* (15 kilometers), and then when they dismounted they fettered the horses so tightly that they could not move. The horses were not allowed to eat or drink until they were suitably calm. This made the fat tighter on the back of the horses, made their bellies small but strong, and made the croup large but firm. The Song envoy Zhao Hong noted that in the first and second years of the horse's life, the Mongols strengthened and trained it in the steppe. In the third summer, they again broke the horse. Additionally, they trained the horse to be quiet and not bite, kick, or neigh. Zhao Hong also noted that the Mongol horse was so well trained that when a Mongol warrior dismounted he did not tether the horse, as it would not run off.

horses exceeded that of horses found in the sedentary world. Overall, outside observers commented on the significance of the care and treatment that the Mongols provided to their horses.

In general, the saddle as well as other equipment remained light. The saddle was constructed from wood, and the Mongols rubbed sheep fat into the wood to protect it from swelling and other water damage. The saddle itself possessed a high back and front, thus providing the rider with stability while his hands were otherwise occupied with his bow or other weaponry. The Mongols also shod the hooves of the horses with shoes of iron or wood. Meanwhile, the stirrups were designed so that the weight of the ride was placed on the center of the stirrup and not the sides. This allowed the rider to turn and shoot. Furthermore, the stirrups tended to be short.

Although the trade and selling of horses had been a vital component of steppe economy for centuries, it appears that Mongols during the period of the empire began to restrict this. Both Ogodei and Mongke issued decrees to prevent horses from being smuggled to Song China. At one point only Mongols and messengers could ride horses along the border, and those who violated the order were executed. It appears that with northern China, Central Asia, Dasht-i Kipchak, and much of the Middle East at their disposal, the Mongol khans were no longer dependent on an independent sedentary neighbor for goods and thus had the luxury of banning the exportation of horses.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Ogodei Khan; *Military:* Tactics; *Objects and Artifacts:* Five Snouts; *Primary Documents:* Document 16

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Kumiss

Kumiss, or fermented mare's milk, is the primary alcoholic beverage produced by pastoral nomadic groups, including the Mongols. Because mare's milk has a relatively low sugar content (about 6 percent), the maximum alcohol content achieved through fermentation is just over 3 percent by volume, which is comparable to the alcohol content found in beer but significantly lower than that found in other beverages produced through natural fermentation such as wine, mead, and sake. The potency of kumiss can be increased through various distillation processes, including freeze distillation. Kumiss contains both nutritive and intoxicating properties. Nomadic warriors often consumed it on campaign for sustenance, while within the camps—and later at the Mongol

court—the beverage was consumed both recreationally and ritually. The sharing of kumiss with guests represented hospitality and mutual respect. When leaders met to discuss politics, they opened the meeting by sharing a cup; when a new khan was elected, the participants imbibed; and when the khan was elevated, he was served kumiss. The ceremonial importance of kumiss in traditional steppe culture was disseminated throughout the Mongol Empire, and the beverage continued to be produced and consumed within the successor khanates, especially among the Jochids and Chagatayids.

The prominent place of kumiss in steppe society and ceremonials garnered it a great deal of attention in records produced by outside observers, including European visitors to the Mongol courts. One account comes from William of Rubruck, a Franciscan missionary who traveled through the Mongol Empire in the mid-13th century, meeting with both Batu Khan (r. 1227–1255) of the Golden Horde and the grand khan Mongke (r. 1251–1259) at the Mongol capital of Karakorum. Calling the beverage “cosmos,” Rubruck provides detailed descriptions both of Mongol drinking habits and the production of kumiss. According to Rubruck, the Mongols produced kumiss by pouring freshly collected mare’s milk “into a large skin or bag and [then] they begin churning it with a specially made stick which is as big as a man’s head at its lower end, and hollowed out; and when they beat it quickly it begins to bubble like new wine and to turn sour and ferment.” Though critical of the amount of alcohol he saw consumed at the Mongol court—Mongke was often intoxicated during their meetings—Rubruck admits to trying kumiss and expresses surprise at having enjoyed the experience.



Leather flask from Kazakhstan for holding *kumiss*. Made by fermenting mare’s milk, kumiss has been the preferred beverage of nomads for centuries. (Sergey Kohl/Dreamstime.com)

THE DRINKING FOUNTAIN

William of Rubruck claims that the grand khan Mongke had a French engineer build a tree-shaped silver fountain at Karakorum that dispensed various different alcoholic beverages including wine, mead, rice wine, and kumiss. The kumiss that issued from the fountain was actually kara kumiss, a distilled version of the drink.

While kumiss was the preferred drink of Chinggis Khan, with each new Mongol khan the variety of alcoholic beverages served at the Mongol court expanded. Ogodei was fond of wine, introduced with the conquest of Central Asia. Mead came from the European conquests, and rice wine came from the war with the Song Empire.

A similar process of kumiss production to that recorded by Rubruck is described by Herodotus in his discussion of the manners and customs of the Scythians, indicating that pastoral nomads have known the basics of fermenting mare's milk since antiquity. However, the exact origins and discovery of kumiss are unknown. By the time of the Mongol Empire, such varied sources as William of Rubruck, Marco Polo, and Ibn Battuta record that kumiss was served important ceremonial functions and also that entire herds of horses were kept solely for kumiss production. There was a strict protocol that accompanied the serving and consumption of kumiss, which features prominently in stories of the beverage recorded in *The Secret History of the Mongols* and by Rubruck and Ibn Battuta. The ritual consumption of kumiss was incorporated into early Timurid practice, but by the mid-15th century it had once again been relegated to the steppe. For Jochid and Chagatayid rulers, kumiss maintained its ceremonial importance through the early 16th century. Babur records its use in a yak-tail enthronement ceremony in Moghulistan around 1501. By the late 16th century, however, this ceremony was Islamized by the Jochid Uzbeks, and kumiss was replaced with water from the well of Zamzam in Mecca.

In more recent history, 19th- and early 20th-century European and Russian doctors touted kumiss as a veritable cure-all, especially for consumptive disorders such as tuberculosis. Such illustrious figures as Leo Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov were reportedly prescribed kumiss treatments. The latter apparently gained a good deal of weight as a result of his kumiss therapy, though it did not succeed in curing his tuberculosis. Despite kumiss possessing some potential health benefits, it soon became clear that the restorative qualities of kumiss had been greatly exaggerated, and its prescriptive use all but disappeared by the time of World War I. Today its consumption is primarily limited to nomadic and seminomadic populations, especially those in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Mongolia, and Inner Mongolia, People's Republic of China.

Stephanie Honchell

See also: *Individuals:* Ibn Battuta; Mongke Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Franciscans; Italians; *Key Events:* William of Rubruck, Journey of; *Primary Documents:* Document 16

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Medicine

The Mongols had their own medical traditions but quickly borrowed from others as they created their empire. Their oldest traditions were involved with herbal medicine and a belief in the efficacy of eating various parts of animals to aid against dysfunctions in various internal systems of the body. Sympathetic magic was clearly involved, such as the Chinese tradition of eating walnuts to aid the brain. When Hoelun went looking for food for her abandoned family after the Taiyichiud had moved on without them, after the poisoning of Yesugei she had her brood consume usually despised fish; she also found plants known for their medicinal properties, such as garden burnet and cinquefoil roots. Later sources in fact suggest that later Mongols knew many medicinal herbs and probably in early times as well. Although not unknown in Arabic medicine, the tradition that the Mongols used specific parts of animals to counter specific medical problems was widely assigned to them at the time of their empire, as far afield as Muslim Spain. Vestiges of this are found in the *Yinshan zhengyao* (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink), the 1330 imperial dietary manual from Mongol China.

Among those partaking of foreign as well as, apparently, Mongolian medicine was no less a personage than Chinggis Khan. His encounter with a Chinese doctor is mentioned in the poetry of the great minister Yelu Chucai (1190–1244). Also coming to court and to the court of princes and others in the early days, in addition to specialized Chinese doctors, were Taoist practitioners and Tibetans. The former offered extended life, in part through yoga.

One of the first Tibetan medical practitioners among the Mongols was the Tshalpa Lama Tsangpa Dunkhurwa, who used his skills to cure one of Chinggis Khan's ministers of an illness. Subsequently important was the Sakya Lama Kunga Gyeltsen (1182–1251), or Sakya Pandita, although his abilities were more in connection with shamanic medicine. Later Tibetans, representing a mixed Persian-Tibetan school, the Bi-chi, from a Persian word for "doctor," dominated the dietary medicine of the Mongol court in China, leaving behind many traces in the *Yinshan zhenyao*.

Tibetans were also active in Mongol Iran, although we do not know if any were medical practitioners. Chinese doctors were also clearly active there, as is witnessed by the surviving fragments of what was once a major translation effort, the compendium *Tankusq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'ulum-i khitay* (Treasure Book of the Il-Khans on the Sciences and Learning of China). It translated and interpreted a great deal of information regarding Chinese medicine, including an entire Chinese treatise on

pulsing. The text created the first sourcebook of Chinese medicine for anywhere outside the Chinese world.

Nonetheless, despite the obvious importance of Chinese medicine in China and in the Mongol west, it was Arabic medicine that became the medical mainstream in the Mongol world. Arabic medicine is primarily based upon Greek medicine as expressed by Galen (129–ca. 216) of Pergamon, which looks at the universe in terms of the Greek elements fire, air, water, and earth and at the body in terms of temperaments and humors.

The temperaments are precise mixes of the fundamental properties of hot, cold, wet, and dry. There are nine basic temperaments, mixtures of hot, cold, wet, and dry, one in balance and eight out of balance, but there are many variations due to place, habits, sex, food, and so forth. The four humors, which complete the system, are secondary elements—that is, they exist above the level of fire, air, water, and earth, the primary elements, but are still closely connected with them. In Arabic medicine the humors are blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile, with each associated with one of the Greek elements and having properties in terms of the hot, cold, wet, and dry system. Phlegm is cold and wet, for example, with some internal variations and corresponds to the element of water. Although not all can change, some humors can change into another under the right conditions (e.g., phlegm can become blood when worked on by an “innate heat”). The real importance of the humors for the system is that the dominance or absence of a given humor results in illness. And when the dominance or absence becomes extreme, death can result.

Chinese medicine also had its elements and humors, but its system was nowhere as sophisticated as the Arabic system, and the theory of Chinese medicine was based on a defective appreciation of how the body actually worked. The Greeks dissected, even humans, while the Chinese did not, although real bodily systems did come to the fore in connection with Chinese forensics. In any case, it was Arabic medicine that was chosen by the Mongols, including the Mongols of China, as their preferred medicine.

For Mongol China, a clear expression of this, in addition to specifically Arabic medical institutions for the court and even the people of the capital, was the Chinese-language encyclopedia of Chinese medicine *Huihui yaofang* (Muslim Medicinal Recipes). The fragments of this important text, about 15 percent of what once was a major opus of 3,500 pages, now exist in a Ming dynasty copy. It is a collection of information on medical theory, including discussions of surgery associated with head wound repair, and thousands of recipes for many conditions, including strokes and even psychiatric conditions. It is the only Chinese work to include Arabic script entries for medicinals, medical authorities such as Galen, and medical technical terms. The text is probably to be associated with Isa the translator (d. early 14th century), a Syrian physician who practiced medicine during the time of the empire and after and also traveled back and forth between Mongol Iran and China. The Arabic medical institutions of the Mongol court seem to have grown out of his family practice.

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See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yelu Chucai; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Hoelun; *Key Events:* Chinggis Exchange; Yesugei, Death of; *Primary Documents:* Document 38

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Money

One way to understand the vast changes created by the Mongols is to look at their money. This uncovers the civilian bureaucratic structure of the state, taxes, payment for services, lack of or encouragement of trade, status of tributaries, centralization and dissolution of power, economic development, and, finally, the concept of legitimacy. Therefore, by recognizing these manifestations in the coinage, we can better understand the Mongol state.

There was a great deal of money from Hangzhou to Damascus and from Bulghar to Hormuz. In Chinggis Khan's time, the Mongols adopted local currencies and modified them by just adding "of the Khan," such as to that of the Tangut and the Khwarazmshahs. These were conquest monies, like the reparations Germany paid after World War I. This was especially true when they took Zhongdu. Reparations soon turned into annual payments as tribute consisting of goods in kind, such as horses, but money, a convertible and easily transportable form of wealth, was always part of the system. At the same time, booty apportioned by the central treasury to troops, not including subject people assigned to commanders, was taxed by the government, following tradition at home. As a result, the government received two sources of monetary wealth at first, that from conquered subjects and that from conquering Mongols.

Administration changed dramatically under Ogodei, who had two great *quriltais* that improved imperial structure and taxation. New provinces under central directives began to organize their own currencies according to regional practices. In Central Asia and in Iran and Iraq, the system was based on round silver coins of a definite weight and purity. This allowed the *ortaq*s (royal merchants) to trade more easily along the entire continent. In China there were more forms of money, notably salt cakes, strings of cowrie shells in Yunnan and Southeast Asia, copper cash, and even paper money

backed by silk stocks. Both systems were related to the steppe *balish*, silver ingots that were the ultimate financial standard. Civilian governors administered the regional systems, which deployed agents to collect taxes generally once a year. Taxes were set on individuals, called a poll tax, and on customs duties from a commercial center. The trade tax dominated for a while. Mengu Bolad in Tabriz established workshops, as did Mas'ud Beg in Almaliq, for example, to develop commerce. In fact, one issue from Azerbaijan in 1240 plainly said “May God make it (the city) prosperous!” Nevertheless, when Mongke became khan in 1248, the poll tax was instituted across the empire, which required an enormous effort to produce another census in each province. For the central areas, the normal coin generally had *Qān al-ʿAdil al-ʿAzam* (The Magnificent and Just Khan), while those areas still controlled by subject kings with special treaty rights, particularly Fars and Anatolia, had their rulers’ names on coinage.



Gold coin with the names of Chinggis Khan and Samarkand, 1224. The Mongols quickly learned the value of minting coins to legitimate their rule and used common motifs throughout their reign. (State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, Russia/Ancient Art and Architecture Collection Ltd./Bridgeman Images)

However, at the death of Mongke in 1259, political dysfunctions led to abandonment of the centralized poll tax to locally generated customs duties. According to previously established imperial agreement, customs duties provided revenue for local payments of civil servants, special army units, and building projects as compared to remitting significant portions of a poll tax to Karakorum. This is the most interesting period numismatically, since more money than ever before was struck, and international trade flourished, encompassing places they controlled even to Vietnam and the Malabar coast of India and to external places such as Egypt.

The styles changed from simple statements such as “Magnificent Khan” on one side and a religious pronouncement on the other to various kinds of information. For example, in 1258 when Hulegu conquered Iraq and Syria, he provided his name and that of his brother, Mongke—a first for a royal issue that was soon copied throughout Iran. In southern Kazakhstan and Uyghuristan, the governors also placed their names on coinage. In the commercial lifeline of the Volga River for the Golden Horde, coinage better

retained steppe tradition. Like the first Mongol issues no names were given, but *tamghas*, personal or dynastic geometric symbols, appeared. This new practice of identifying the khan not only let rulers stake their claim to territory but also indicated that they were personally responsible for the good quality and adequate quantity of money. If the government debased the coinage, it was cheating itself in the taxes it collected.

These currencies continued to be based on silver, but eventually other forms came into play. Gold, the foundation of Islamic coinage, was gradually reintroduced, at first only as exceptional issues such as at inaugurations, but around 1290 just before and during Ghazan Khan's reforms in Iran, it became fully integrated with the silver system. Copper also joined the ranks, but a trimetallic system was always fraught with difficulty for the Mongols. Indeed, the Golden Horde did not attempt such a system, sticking to silver. China, after the inclusion of the south under Khubilai, diversified and even made paper money work, an innovation of the previous Southern Song.

Importantly, the explosion of monetary types and increases in volume indicate the monetization of the Mongol Empire. No longer was trade mostly by barter or tax in kind, but government-controlled issues of certain value were used internally and externally. This revolutionized financial institutions, bringing all parts of the empire out of an awkward and inflexible method of exchange and value creation into a unified financial power. The growth of trade is the best evidence for this development: Egyptians bought products from the Golden Horde, both of whom used the same weight for silver coinage, and Egyptians and Iranian Mongols coordinated their trade on a mutual standard of account, or *mithqal*. The demise of the empire did not affect the revolution, because succeeding states adopted its improvements.

Judith Kolbas

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; *Quriltai;* *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; *Tamgha;* *Taxation;* *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Ghazan; Hulegu; Mongke Khan; Ogodei Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Ortoq; Tangut; *Key Places:* Uyghuristan; Zhongdu; *Primary Documents:* Document 33

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Onggon

The *onggon* (*ongghon*, *ongghod*, *ongon*, *ongod*) generally appeared as a human figure drawn on or made from silk, felt, wood, clay, or metal. The term also refers to the place of a spirit, such as graves and animals offered to a spirit. Although *onggons* differed in size, three or so could usually fit into a box 8 by 12 inches in size. The cult of *onggon* was believed to have originated from the ancestor cults and was linked with shamanism and

the native religions of Inner Asian peoples. Medieval explorers and modern-day ethnographers have both extensively documented the use of *onggons*.

The concept of *onggon* has diverse meanings. It is the physical representation of a spirit, including that of a lord spirit or an ancestral spirit and even that of a deceased shaman but could also be the spirit of someone who died unnaturally. In addition, it can represent a deity. As such, *onggons* can be categorized into several types, such as (1) personifications of heavenly beings, (2) totemic ancestors, (3) spirits of great hunters, (4) spirits of renowned shaman ancestors, (5) anthropomorphized skills, (6) guardians of the welfare and peacefulness of the family, and (7) protectors of various household utilities and instruments.

Mongolian shamans revered natural and intangible beings through the manufacture of *onggons*. In the tradition of Mongolian shamanism, there were three forms of consecrating *onggons*. First, in the figurative form, an *onggon* was presented in a figurine of stone, wood, and cloth. Second, in the consecration form, an *onggon* appeared in the form of *seter*, which was ribbons attached to the mane or neck of an animal. Finally, in the line form, an *onggon* was shown in a combination of the two other forms and appeared as one or several figurines bound with ribbons.

It was believed that placing *onggons* in one's yurt could bless the family with well-being and protect the family from evil spirits and diseases. The family gave the *onggons* butter, the first milk of herds, and kumiss as offerings. After the third year of an ancestor's death, one could make an *onggon* and worship it because the Mongols believed that after three years the soul entered the spirit world and was no longer attached to the body. Sometimes the shaman made an *onggon* after he pacified an evil spirit. Powerful leaders kept *onggons* on carts, including an *onggon* of Chinggis Khan. A shaman's *onggon* was usually placed outside the yurt. *Onggons* were also placed in clean highland pastures or on the northern side of a river, both auspicious sites. Most *onggons*, however, were generally established near their own clan, master, or pupil.

In the 13th century, travelers such as John of Plano Carpini and Marco Polo reported that each tent of a respected Mongol held some *onggons*. John of Plano Carpini wrote that the Mongols worshipped the small idols made of tiny silk cloth and offered to them libations of the first milk of their herds. According to Marco Polo, an *onggon* symbolizing the household protector, which was also known as Nachighai, was usually found above the Mongol yurt. There was also an *onggon* positioned on each side of the four directions, including an udder-shaped figure to give blessings to the chore of milking the livestock.

During the Second Conversion to Buddhism (1575–1655), Tibetan Buddhism again became popular among the Mongols. Mongolian shamanism and native religion were persecuted by Buddhist missionaries. Because the *onggon* was considered the center of shamanism, *onggons* were collected from the new converts and destroyed. Hereafter the practice of worshipping *onggon* was banned, although *onggon* veneration never completely died out.

By the 1800s, *onggon* worship was popular only among the Buriats but could be found among some Oirat and Inner Mongols. In Siberia, Buriat shamans made domestic *onggons* for married Buriat men just after their wedding and sometimes for

bachelors; these *onggons* consisted of three to five anthropomorphic figures of the same form drawn on a fabric with round heads and eyes made in glass or metal beads. These images of spirits were kept in wooden boxes or in felt bags together with herbs and tobacco. The Buriats also worshipped the *onggon* of the Lord of Fire. For the Buriats on the Upper Lena, the *onggon* of the Lord of Fire was three small figures in a foot-long felt bag; for the Balagan Buriat, the *onggon* of the Lord of Fire was two human figurines made of wooden pieces. These *onggons* were kept in a red bag hung on the left-hand front pillar of a wooden tent.

Today *onggon* making is still practiced among the Mongols. During the late 1990s, anthropologists found that *onggons* were still worshipped by lineages and households of the Darkhads in northern Mongolia. To promote a successful hunt, Darkhad hunters usually carry their *onggons*. Many Darkhad *onggons* are kept in a specific and fixed location, usually associated with the burial site of a dead shaman. After a shaman died, his soul was believed to become an *onggon* and the master of his burial site. Some of these places and their *onggon* masters have been memorialized for decades and have become markers legitimating herding and hunting land for different clans. For the Darkhad Mongols, each *onggon* is supposed to belong to one of two parts, the 55 “western skies” (*baruun tenger*), also known as “white skies” (*tsagaan tenger*), and the 44 “eastern skies” (*züün tenger*), also called “black skies” (*khar tenger*). An *onggon* as spirit guardian might have many spirit helpers (*zarts*) or auxiliary spirits. Those auxiliary spirits are usually known in the form of a wild animal that has a specific ability. These animals include the wolf, fox, and magpie. But sometimes *onggons* may appear in nonzoomorphic forms, in nonliving natural phenomena, or in social trends.

Wei-chieh Tsai

See also: *Government and Politics:* Shamanism; *Objects and Artifacts:* Tenggeri; Yurt

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Pasta

It is said that Marco Polo brought pasta back from Mongol China. Strictly speaking, pasta is noodles and similar foods, including stuffed and unstuffed raviolis and dumplings, made primarily from the flour of durum wheat (e.g., semolina). As such, pasta is a phenomenon of the areas where durum wheat is grown, principally the areas around

the Mediterranean and the Middle East, anywhere it is hot enough to grow durum that has enough water and farmers experienced with growing durum. Durum is particularly favored in pasta making, since its gluten forms extremely long strands that help form a dough that easily sticks together and also can be drawn out to form quite long noodles strands that are still strong enough for cooking and do not break when used, for example, for spaghetti and similar foods. This is an extreme virtue of pasta noodles for some dishes, and the noodles in question may even be a yard long (and are supposed to be eaten nonbroken, as a kind of macho thing).

In practice, the term “pasta” is applied to noodles and similar foods made from other wheat flours and even nonwheat flours. And not all cooks make a fetish of long, long noodles. The shorter ones produced by regular wheat flours are in many cases perfectly fine and sometimes even have special flavors preferred by consumers.

Pasta, whether proper pasta from durum wheat or from substitute flours, may have first been invented in Iraq and other parts of the inland Middle East. At least the culture of pasta first becomes noticeable there, although noodles were said to have been eaten by Arab nomads before the era of Islamic expansion. In any case, a pasta culture was fully established in the territories of the Abbasid Caliphate no later than the eighth and ninth centuries, as witnessed by the most ancient Arabic cookbook and recipe literature (*itriyya* was a kind of noodle that was favored at the time).

The Arabs apparently spread true pasta west, to Libya and Sicily, for example, where pasta is mentioned among other places in the *Taquinum sanitatis*. This is an illustrated Latin version with some adaptation of the dietary version of Ibn Butlan (*Taqwim al'shihha*). In this text pasta is characterized as “hanging noodles,” pointing to the ability of durum flour to produce long unbroken noodles.

According to legend, Marco Polo brought back pasta from China, but the legend is untrue, and Italy already had real pasta and many, many local imitations from the Arabic world. Nonetheless, the legend does recognize the fact that China has its own traditions of noodles and similar foods stretching back to early times, very early times when noodles were first made using millet. Later a wide range of pasta imitations appear that were made from local wheats, northern China being a wheat-growing area. Terminology suggests that while independent invention is also possible in many cases, there was a largely Middle Eastern derivation for most Chinese imitation pastas from Tang times on when China was overrun by merchants and others coming from the distant west. Many of the dumplings for this period and after are even called by Middle Eastern names. In one Ming dynasty household manual, for example, they are grouped as *samosa*, an Iranian name for a dumpling, primarily today's *jiaozi*.

But real pasta was known in China too, where it was interestingly referred to as “hanging noodles,” just like in the *Taquinum sanitatis*. The 1330 dietary manual for the Mongol court, the *Yinshan zhengyao* (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink), in addition to referring to “hanging noodles,” also mentions a special hard wheat, harder than other wheats, that is grown in “Muslim fields,” possibly in China or that was even an import.

Typical of Mongol era pasta was *tutumash*, a Turkic large noodle that is still eaten today. *Tutumash*, the name recalling the back-and-forth motion (*tutum*) of the rolling

pin used to roll out the noodle, or *ash*, is made by making skins that are stuffed with mutton roasted dry and other choice ingredients. Once stuffed, the skins are cooked in a thick broth along with small noodles, onions, and garlic. Cooked dry, the *tutumash* were mostly eaten with cream or yogurt and finely ground basil, still the case today.

A typical Mongol period recipe was the *manty*, raviolis stuffed usually with mutton as well as sheep's fat and even tail, also a source of rich fat, and steamed. The result was also eaten like the *tutumash* with garlic, cream or yogurt, and finely ground basil. Sometimes the *manty*, still widely found, is claimed as a Chinese food and related to an ancient unstuffed food, the *mantou*, meaning "barbarian head." But although *manty* is also written as *mantou*, different characters are used, and the word *manty* itself is used all over the Turkic world; even the distant Yakuts have their *manty*, which suggests an origin before that of the early Chinese *mantou*. If anything, the Chinese food is probably a very early borrowing from Inner Asia, if the names are not just coincidence.

Be that as it may, the few examples given here indicate that the pasta and imitation pasta of the Mongol period is nothing like what the Italians were eating at the time and today. If Marco Polo brought back foods of such Mongol kinds from China, it is unlikely that they caught on. Survivals are found today strictly in the Middle East, not Italy.

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See also: *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; *Objects and Artifacts:* Yinshan zhengyao; *Key Places:* Abbasid Caliphate

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The Secret History of the Mongols

A history of the life of Chinggis Khan, *The Secret History of the Mongols* is one of the very few documents concerning the Mongols actually written by the Mongols themselves. It is said that the victors write history, but for the Mongols, it was written by the conquered. Most of the primary sources concerning the Mongols were written by Persians, Chinese, Russians, Arabs, Armenians, Europeans, and others. While some of the documents were written by people employed by the Mongols, their history was almost always written from the viewpoint of an outsider.

This is why *The Secret History of the Mongols* is such an important source. Although it covers the prehistory of the Mongols, the rise of Chinggis Khan and his career, and a

brief account of Ogodei's reign, it tells the reader much about the Mongols. While it is an important historical source, it is also in the form of epic literature, often blending history with myth, particularly concerning the origins of the Mongols.

The title comes from the idea that it was something meant only for the eyes of the Mongols. While this is true, it is not something that is used solely for the glorification of the Mongol rulers. Instead, it gives a rather intimate portrayal of the rise of Chinggis Khan from his youth to his becoming the ruler of a vast empire. It does not attempt to conceal embarrassing facts or weaknesses. In *The Secret History* we learn that Chinggis Khan killed his half brother, was afraid of dogs, and fled while his wife was kidnapped.

What is also remarkable about this work is that it provides the reader with insight into the Mongol mind. Since it was written for Mongols, many things are omitted or just barely referred to, as a Mongol would automatically understand certain statements or comprehend what was implied from the context. The focus of activities deals with Mongolia and the steppes; events in sedentary territories are given short shrift. To the modern reader it can be somewhat difficult to understand, and many deeper meanings are overlooked in often simple statements, yet it is a rich source of information particularly on the early stages of the Mongol Empire. The blend of history and oral history method and the incorporation of mythical aspects and storytelling elements make the work a unique piece not only in world history but also in literature.

The work was written in the Year of the Mouse, which was based on the 12-animal cycle of years, placing it at either 1228, 1240, or 1252. The year 1228 was the year after the death of Chinggis Khan, which would make sense, as there was undoubtedly a desire to record the life of the great Mongol leader for future generations. The year 1240 was part of the reign of Ogodei, and the work concludes with his reign but not his death. Most scholars also believe that the work was at least redacted in 1252 during the reign of Mongke, if not completely composed during that period. *The Secret History of the Mongols* survives today, however, due not so much to the Mongols but rather to the Ming dynasty of China (1368–1644). As the Mongols remained a major threat to the

WHO WROTE *THE SECRET HISTORY OF THE MONGOLS*?

The author of the work remains unknown, but it has not stopped scholars from speculating on the topic. Undoubtedly it was someone who was alive during the life of Chinggis Khan, as many of the details are too intimate to be otherwise known. Several scholars have suggested Shigi Qutuqtu, based on his position after the *quriltai* of 1206 as *yeke jarguchi* as well as his connection to Chinggis Khan. And if not Shigi Qutuqtu, then perhaps the author was someone who worked as a member of his staff.

Igor de Rachewiltz, one of the leading scholars on *The Secret History of the Mongols*, recently altered his views and posits that the author may have even been Ogodei Khan. Unfortunately, the riddle of authorship may be something that is never answered. Ogodei Khan is an intriguing possibility and would explain the addition of one brief chapter on his life but is by no means certain.

Chinese Empire after the fall of the Yuan Empire, there was a large need for translators and interpreters of Mongolian. *The Secret History of the Mongols* was used as a textbook. The translations we use today are based on Chinese translations into a phonetic pronunciation of Mongolian. An original Mongolian copy of *The Secret History* has not been found, although parts of it resurface in other Mongolian chronicles.

The Secret History was not translated into Western languages until the 19th century, when parts of it were translated into German, French, and Russian. An English translation did not appear until the late 1960s, when the Australian scholar Igor de Rachewiltz began to translate parts of it in irregular installments. In 1980, Francis W. Cleaves at Harvard University produced a complete translation; however, it was in King James English. Cleaves believed that the particular idiom was more similar to what the Mongols would have used. Thus, Cleaves's translation remained relatively inaccessible for years, but since then more comprehensible translations have been produced. One such is Paul Kahn's translation of Cleaves's King James English. This, however, is an abridged version and, while useful for discussing the major events, leaves out many details that are useful for a true understanding of the text. The most authoritative, however is the multivolume translation and notes of Igor de Rachewiltz.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Writing Systems; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Ogodei Khan

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Shengwu qinzheng lu

The *Shengwu qinzheng lu* is a Chinese translation of a lost Mongolian chronicle concerning the lives of Chinggis Khan and his successor, Ogodei Khan. The title of the text can be literally translated as "Record of the Campaigns of Chinggis Khan." The alternate translation is "Campaigns of Chinggis Khan." The initial phrase, *Shengwu* (meaning "holy-martial") is a posthumous title given to Chinggis Khan honoring him

as the lawgiver who achieved the conquest by force. The text's historical value has been underestimated compared to the attention that *The Secret History of the Mongols* has received.

As one of the most comprehensive materials on the life of Chinggis Khan, *Shengwu qinzheng lu* has similarities with three other documents and might share some common sources, since there exist extensive similar passages and exact quotations among those four works. These other three sources are (1) *The Secret History of the Mongols*, (2) the biography of Chinggis Khan written by Persian historian and minister Rashid al-Din of the Il-Khanate and preserved in his *Ghazanid History*, and (3) the first chapter of the basic annals and the biographical chapters of the *Yuan shi*, the official history of the Yuan dynasty edited by a famous Ming scholar-official, Song Lian (1310–1381). The original text of the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* is believed to be the *Shilu* (Veritable Records) of Chinggis Khan compiled in Mongolian and Chinese by Sarman (or Sarban) under Khubilai Khan's patronage and presented to Khubilai in 1288. In 1290, a revision of that text was presented to Khubilai Khan by Sarman and Uru'udai. The original was written in the Square Script. Sarman suggested to Khubilai Khan that it be transcribed into the Uyghur Mongolian script. Khubilai approved. The final revision of the *Veritable Records* was finished in 1303 and presented to Khubilai. The reason why the *Veritable Records* was renamed *Record of the Campaigns of Chinggis Khan* is still unknown.

Compared to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* is compiled in the form of official history. Most of the ignoble records on Chinggis Khan's ancestry and youth that appeared in *The Secret History* were censored by the compilers. The text begins, unlike *The Secret History*, with the birth of Chinggis Khan and skips his ancestry, which is preserved in detail in *The Secret History*. Stories such as those of Alan Goa, Bodonchar, and Yisugei are lost in the *Shengwu qinzheng lu*. For example, the stories of his murder of his half-blood brother Begter and the abduction of his wife Borte might be considered disgraceful and were censored by the editors. The stories about Chinggis Khan's companions and his death are also avoided in the *Shengwu qinzheng lu*. But it supplies far more reliable dates, and the account on northern China corroborates other sources. Regarding the account on Ogodei Khan in the *Shengwu qinzheng lu*, it has less detail than the one on Chinggis Khan, and the content is more corresponding to the one in the *Ghazanid History*.

For the sources of the *Shengwu qinzheng lu*, it is believed that the Chinese *Shengwu qinzheng lu* and the Persian *Ghazanid History*'s biography of Chinggis Khan share common Mongolian sources and that the *Yuan shi*'s accounts on Chinggis Khan and Ogodei Khan are based on the *Shengwu qinzheng lu*. Scholars claim that either *The Secret History of the Mongols* or the *Altan debter* (Golden Record) mentioned by Rashid al-Din is supposed to be the Mongolian source. However, so far that Mongolian source is still not clearly identified; the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* uses some source other than *The Secret History*, and the former is closer to the original source. Comparing the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* to *The Secret History* helps us understand the editing process of the Mongol historiography.

The Chinese translation of the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* was not prepared until the downfall of the Yuan dynasty. It was compiled and translated together with that of the

Veritable Records of the 13 reigns of the Yuan dynasty under the succeeding Ming dynasty as part of the compilation project of the *Yuan shi* in 1369. However, it also shares the same problems with the *Yuan shi* due to misinterpretation of Mongolian names and the time restraints given by the Ming emperor.

Until the downfall of the Ming dynasty, the Chinese text of the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* was kept by Tao Zongyi, who survived the upheaval of the late Yuan period, as part of his massive anthology, the *Shuofu*. However, it was not noticed by Chinese historians until the Qing dynasty. But its importance was still not widely recognized. The most comprehensive Qing imperial anthology, *Siku quanshu* (The Complete Library of the Four Treasuries), did not contain *Shengwu qinzheng lu* because of its unrefined language and inconsistent composition.

In the course of text transmission, many of the Mongolian personal and terrestrial names were incorrectly transcribed by Chinese scribes and scholars due to lacking in knowledge of Mongolian. Many Mongolists, such as Wang Guowei and Paul Pelliot, have researched numerous questions derived from those mistakes. The scholar Louis Hambis also discussed the textual history of *Shengwu qinzheng lu*.

In the early 20th century Wang Guowei had published a text of the *Shengwu qinzheng lu* with useful commentaries. Based on Wang's work, Jia Jinyan published a comprehensive commentary with an edited text of *Shengwu qinzheng lu* in 1979 using the different manuscripts found in China. Currently, Christopher P. Atwood is preparing a critical edition and full English translation of *Shengwu qinzheng lu* with extensive notes and index while gathering more manuscripts outside of China.

Wei-chieh Tsai

See also: *Organization and Administration: Writing Systems; Objects and Artifacts: The Secret History of the Mongols*

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Tenggeri

The Mongolian term *tenggeri* (heaven) comes as a loanword from Old Turkic *tangri*. Constituting the foundation of their government (*toru*) and tradition (*yosu*), the term is of singular importance to our understanding of the history of the Mongols. *Tenggeri* refers to heaven proper—that is, to all that belongs within the vault or dome of the observable sky including not only the sun (*nara*), moon (*sara*), and stars (*hodun*) but also the atmosphere, the wind, rain, snow, thunder, lightning, and so on and, importantly, the metaphysical firmament, comprised in the manner of a canopy of things invisible but by no means imaginary, such as the celestial North Pole, the path of the sun or

ecliptic, the celestial equator, and so on. In its totality *tenggeri* is venerated as a deity. As a deity, whether *tenggeri* refers to anything apart from the vault of heaven is uncertain and doubtful.

The singular importance of *tenggeri* in Mongolian tradition lies in its primacy for bringing order to the void in nature. As we all depend upon heaven for orientation and conventions of time and space, one who would rule Earth does so in conformity with the rule of heaven. In this fundamental interdependence the relationship between heaven and Earth is taken for one of symmetry. The *tenggeri* of the Mongols is made in their national image. It reflects their way of life. Things and their seasons on Earth are known by their sign (*belge*) in heaven. This symmetry between heaven and Earth is expressed through figurative language, allegory. The stars are known by hosts of earthly figures. Heaven itself is likened to a bowl, the axis from the celestial North Pole to the point of observation is likened to the axle of a cart, the horizon is likened to the ocean (*dalai*), and so on.

The legitimacy of the institution of the khan derives from *tenggeri*. The khan is said to possess heaven's favor. Heaven ordains the khan to rule. To rule is his destiny. The khan traces his ancestry from an origin in heaven. He takes the epithet "son of heaven." Heaven affords the khan protection (*ibegel*) and inspires his charisma (*sulde*). His followers elevate him to the khanship by raising him up on a felt carpet, symbolizing the heavenly firmament. It is said that to the khan the reins of the heavenly chariot are loosed, meaning that for him the way to rule is open. He rules the lives of common people with a power consubstantial with the rule of heaven itself. With heaven, the khan possesses the power to bind or loose—that is, to determine the fates of others.

The influence of *tenggeri* over the Mongolian way of life was all-encompassing. As the Song dynasty envoy Zhao Gong notes, the Mongols show reverence to *tenggeri* in all of their deeds. Later Song envoys Peng Daya and Su Ting note that the Mongols all, from lord to commoner, speak of their reliance on heaven. The universality of heaven gave them their calling as a nation, and in faithfulness to *tenggeri* they took it as their sacred duty to pacify and rule the world. Edicts opened with the phrase *mongke tenggeri-yin kuchun-dur* (by the power of eternal heaven) and closed with the veiled threat that should the edict not be heeded, the khan himself knows nothing of the future but heaven knows what will happen. Epithets attributed to *tenggeri* include *deere* (supreme), *mongke* (eternal), and *erketu* (mighty).

Tenggeri was propitiated through various rituals. These include seasonal auspices to the four directions and the showing of physical deference to various heavenly manifestations, such as the peal of thunder or an eclipse. As the earthly manifestation of the sun, offerings were made to fire and the hearth. Offerings to the souls of ancestors were made to sustain the dead in their abode in heaven. The fortune of *tenggeri* was elicited through dream visions, prophecy, omens, the attainment of ecstasy or trance, numerous types of magic, and other forms of divination such as scapulimancy.

In signifying a time for every purpose, *tenggeri* was amoral. As John of Plano Carpini notes, the Mongols' heaven gives both good and ill. Likewise, *tenggeri* sanctioned successful outcomes and condemned each and every failure. If there was a battle to be fought, it was won or lost depending on heaven's favor.

KHUBILAI AND HEAVEN

When Khubilai Khan (r. 1260–1294) adopted Buddhism during his reign, this move dramatically impacted the makeup and influence of *tenggeri* going forward. Buddhism, like the monotheistic traditions of the West, transcends the dome of heaven with an abiding moral order. From the outset Buddhist teachers began the process of layering over and supplanting the order of *tenggeri* with a new law. Old ways die hard, and the Mongols did not abandon *tenggeri* without a fight; nor did they give it up overnight. In Khubilai's lifetime, however, the *tenggeri* that inspired the Mongol conquest gave way to the Buddhist dharma across much of the empire. (Subsequently khanates in Western and Central Asia converted to Islam.) With the Mongols' conversion to dGe-lug-pa Buddhism at the end of the 16th century and their subjugation by the Manchus in the 17th century, *tenggeri* was made a shadow of its former self.

As is commonplace, in reflecting the individual characteristics of every government under its vault, the makeup of heaven changes from one people to another. In this respect Mongolian *tenggeri* was as unique as the heaven of any other tradition. Yet at the same time, as heaven is omnipresent and central to government, governments within what was then the known world all shared much of the same heaven (the sky of the Northern Hemisphere) and relied upon it in kind in their interactions with each other. In this respect Mongolian *tenggeri* bore likeness to and shared history with the various heavens of other traditions across Eurasia. Specifically, Mongolian *tenggeri* reflected an order that was aristocratic, imperial, and militaristic and bore likeness to and shared history with the heaven of aristocratic, imperial, martial governments that came before. As the word itself implies, Mongolian *tenggeri* is influenced by the heaven of the Turks who preceded them as rulers of the steppes. Turko-Mongolian heaven is likewise influenced by that of neighboring aristocratic governments; the Chinese dynastic tradition to the south and the Soghdian-Persian tradition to the west are principal but not exclusive examples.

A tendency exists in modern-day scholarship to associate Mongolian *tenggeri* with “God” and “heaven” in the monotheistic faiths Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. This association is not altogether unfounded, for these traditions do indeed draw from the same ancient aristocratic heritage. However, it bears remembering that these traditions make it their purpose to transcend aristocratic government based on the heavenly vault and its amoral times for every purpose with a government the heaven of which reflects abiding moral order based on common humanity and compassion for all. Although in translation Mongolian *tenggeri* would frequently be substituted for the “God” of other traditions, these equivalencies were known to be not exact but rather the best available. A strong tendency also exists in modern-day scholarship to view *tenggeri* as reflecting a primitive shamanism that originated and carried on in isolation from the rest of the known world. This view too is misguided. It forgets (among other things) the empirical, allegorical, ecumenical, and aristocratic nature of *tenggeri*.

Brian Baumann

See also: *Government and Politics:* Shamanism; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Key Events:* John of Plano Carpini, Journey of; William of Rubruck, Journey of; *Key Places:* Song Empire; *Primary Documents:* Document 41

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***Yinshan zhengyao* (Proper and Essential Things for the Emperor's Food and Drink) (1330)**

The *Yinshan zhengyao* is a cookbook that also contained medical information and was used in the Yuan court. Ritual feasting and other food rituals were an important part of early Mongol culture. The name, for example, of the Mongol imperial capital, Karakorum, according to the Mongolian scholar Gongor, includes the element *qorum/korum*, a winter feast held on the pasture grounds. This feast was an occasion when the common herdsmen, the *karas* ("black" or common people), camped together and could feast and enjoy their winter slowdown. Later meetings of the Mongolian imperial court also became an occasion for feasting at Daidu.

With eyewitness accounts from individuals such as Marco Polo, we know a great deal of what foods and recipes were used at these feasts. At one such feast a remarkable ceremonial book, the *Yinshan zhengyao* (in Chinese), was presented to the then Mongol emperor of China Toq Temur in 1330. Although in essence a cookbook with a detailed discussion of associated *materia dietetica*, this text reflected the changing interests of the Mongols. For example, it includes not only recipes and food lore but also a great deal of medical information. It even specifies medical recipes and practices while also providing stories associated with sages and famous Daoists who practiced their own kind of medicine.

In its present form, a 1456 Ming dynasty reprint, the *Yinshan zhengyao* is organized in three chapters (*juans*). Chapter 1 consists of introductory materials, a table of contents, biographies of sages associated not only with Chinese culture but also with food, and then a set of avoidance chapters, including when drinking liquor, a Mongol interest since these were the people who popularized distilled liquors after all. They follow three sets of avoidances for, respectively, pregnant women, wet nurses, and postpartum

women, and particularly the second may show substantial Islamic influence, since there is little or nothing on avoidances for wet nurses in Chinese sources before the *Yinshan zhengyao*, but such material is found in the *Kitab al-Qanun fi-Tibb* (Canon of Medicine) of Ibn Sina (d. 1037). The most important part of the chapter is its recipes for 95 “Strange Delicacies of Combined Flavors.” These are court foods, mostly banquet soups with little that is Chinese about them in spite of the language of the *Yinshan zhengyao*. Not only are they purely Mongolian recipes, but many of them are for game, and a food culture is revealed containing substantial Persian and particularly Turkic foods and influences. Many of the recipes even have foreign titles, in Mongolian and Persian, Turkic languages, and even Tibetan and Arabic.

Chapter 2, which also reveals substantial foreign influences, begins with a discussion on drinks and liquids. It includes a number of the new distillates that were finding popularity (the text even makes the first reference to the general term for such beverages in much of Eurasia and still used today, *arakhi*) and follows up with a long section on doses and foods for “immortals,” that is, Daoists. There follows a listing of things and foods advantageous for the four seasons, a discussion of the side effects of overindulgence in any of the five flavors, a major section on foods that can cure illness, short sections on food avoidances when taking medicine, properties making certain foods dangerous to eat, a listing of foodstuffs that mutually conflict, and a brief discussion of foods containing poisons and how to process them and concludes with a section on dangerous animal transformations, a section that is more folklore than fact.

Chapter 3 is a complete illustrated listing of all the *materia medica* and *dietetica* called for in the text. While much of the material and its coding in terms of humoral medicine is entirely Chinese, many subjects of the monographs of this section are not. There are, for example, three kinds of swans illustrated and discussed under their Mongolian names. This is typical of the section. The surviving pages of the Yuan edition show excellent illustrations, allowing species identifications in most cases that were even better in the first edition.

The compiler of the *Yinshan zhengyao*, although he may have had help, was Hu Sihui. On the surface his name appears Chinese, but appearances can be deceiving. His book is far too comfortable with Turkic and a larger Islamic culture beyond for him to have been unassimilated Chinese. His name has even been reconstructed as Mongolian by Igor de Rachewiltz and others. Be that as it may, Hu Sihui was most likely from one of the mixed cultures of the Sino-Mongolian frontier zone, the highly Sinified but Turkic-speaking Onggud, for example. All that we know of Hu Sihui is that he wrote this very culturally mixed book and was a court dietary physician probably at least back to the time of Temur Oljeitu (r. 1294–1307). At that time there was a substantial Tibetan influence not only at court but also in the court medical establishment, where a Tibetan was in charge of the official dietary medicine. Such influence shows clearly in the *Yinshan zhengyao*, along with many others. The practice of the Mongol rulers of China was to provide a little something for everyone at the court feasts, and the *Yinshan zhengyao* is a living example that they did.

The *Yinshan zhengyao* continues to be popular today. Its wild animal meats, all with appropriate medical indications, are one reason. Through them largely Mongolian

ideas about foods as cures, specifically animal foods as cures, entered the mainstream of Chinese medicine.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Government and Politics:* Daidu; *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; *Groups and Organizations:* Onggud

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Yurt

Known in Mongolian as a *ger*, the Turkic word “yurt” has become the common name for the round felt-covered dwellings of the Inner Asian pastoral nomad. While modern-day yurts often have solar- or wind-powered electricity, the yurt remains the preferred domicile of pastoral nomads for the same reason they were used in Mongol Empire. The yurt was easily to assemble and disassemble while also being comfortable for extending living in one area.

The yurt was constructed with interlacing pieces of wood, forming a circular lattice. From a circle, which served as a compression ring, poles at a descending angle radiated from it and served as rafters. By using gravity and the outward thrust from the compression ring, the poles kept the walls erect. No beams or other support systems are used to keep it erect other than a rope that encircles the yurt whether the poles meet the walls, holding it together against the outward tension. One's yurt could be as wide in circumference as the length of these poles, which were fastened to the lattice work. Often a chimney was fashioned to assist the smoke's exit. The door was typically a flap, although actual doors could be attached as well. The latter was quite common in the modern era, but it is uncertain as to when this trend began. Regardless, doors were used during the Mongol Empire period. The entire structure was then covered with layers of white felt. Mongolian yurts tended to be more rounded, while many Turkic yurts have a slightly more conical shape.

Felt is made from wool. Unlike hair, wool has scalelike features. By wetting and pounding repeatedly, the wool gradually meshes together, forming sheets of felt. Warm and relatively water resistant, it was the basic cloth used by the nomads. During winter, additional layers of felt were placed on the yurt, but the bare minimum needed was seven sheets of felt of varying shapes. During the hot weather, the lower edge of the felt



Yurt made of felt, Mongolia. Yurts or *gers* were typically covered with felt made from the wool of a herder's sheep. The size and coverings often indicated the status of its inhabitant. (Photocritical/Dreamstime.com)

was raised to allow air flow into the yurt. White felt was preferred and to ensure a consistent color, chalk, white clay, or even bleached and powdered bones was mixed into the wool during the processing of it. Indeed, during the unification period, Chinggis Khan sometimes referred to himself as the ruler of the people of the white tents. Some nomadic groups outside of Mongolia, however, blackened the felt for their yurts. For the white yurts, Turkic tribes often decorated the tops with embroidered designs of vegetation or birds and animals.

The yurt was disassembled in the reverse order of assembly, with the door being removed and then the felt. Next came the poles and the smoke hole. Finally, the lattice-work was broken down into sections. The materials were then loaded on the backs of camels or onto a cart. Both assembly and disassembly took approximately an hour. Some yurts, those of the aristocracy, were rarely disassembled due to their incredible size.

These were placed on enormous wagons and pulled by oxen. The size of the yurt reflected the wealth and status of its owner. The interiors were often sumptuously decorated, with silk or satin wall hangings replacing the felt that was found in a common yurt. For instance, Ogodei Khan possessed a yurt that was draped with *nasij* (gold brocade) in the interior.

Some were so large that they needed more than 20 oxen to pull them. William of Rubruck witnessed one, the yurt of a queen, pulled by 22 oxen and axles that resembled a ship's mast. Unlike American covered wagons, which would have the oxen in rows of two, this was pulled with 11 oxen in one row and then 11 more in front of them. So well trained were these oxen that one wagon could have a driver and then other ox-drawn wagons followed it.

When a camp (*ordo*) is set up, the yurt's doorway always faces south and is between rows of carts. Part of this is to protect the inhabitants from the biting cold wind that came from the north during the winter. Each one of the khan's wives had her own yurt, and these were often camped separately; thus, each wife ran her own *ordu*, and the khan rotated between them. The yurt itself had its own order. In the center was the fire, which most commonly burned *argal* (dried dung). Properly dried dung, gathered by children in baskets, burned without odor and relatively little smoke. On the north side was the couch or seat of the husband, directly opposite the doorway. To the right of the door was the woman's side (the east) and to the left (west) was the husband's side, in terms of where their possessions were placed. Important guests were typically placed in the northern section. Storage was always placed on the sides.

When one entered the yurt, it was considered poor manners and bad luck to step on the threshold. Additionally, one moved clockwise in the yurt, following the path of the sun as the light entered the smoke hole. Thus, one entered from the south and moved west, then to the north, and then toward the east. One did not move directly across the center, near the fire.

The functionality and the importance of the yurt remained even as the Mongols settled. The outline of downtown Ulaanbaatar is in the shape of a yurt.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Karakorum; *Organization and Administration:* Ordo; *Individuals:* Ogodei Khan; *Objects and Artifacts:* Five Snouts; *Primary Documents:* Document 19; Document 45

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KEY PLACES

OVERVIEW ESSAY

The Mongol Empire was the largest contiguous empire in history. With its origins in the steppes of the Mongolian plateau, it expanded across Eurasia and stretched from the Sea of Japan to the Carpathians and from the Persian Gulf into the taiga of Siberia. The empire's rise and expansion irrevocably altered the map of Eurasia. About 30 polities disappeared from the map. After the dissolution of the Mongol Empire new states emerged, but even these were successor states that claimed to be the heirs of Chinggisid authority or were powers that emerged in reaction to the Mongols.

After Chinggis Khan unified the Mongolian plateau, the Mongols began to raid the kingdom of Xi Xia. While the raids yielded plenty of booty, Xi Xia eventually submitted to the Mongols and payed a yearly tribute to the Mongol ruler. Xi Xia became the first sedentary vassal of the Mongols through war. With the peace treaty, the Mongols withdrew. Xi Xia, however, proved to be recalcitrant, and eventually the ruling dynasty, the Li family, was eradicated. Xi Xia was formally annexed into the Mongol Empire. It became clear that the conquered dynasty would never acquiesce to its subordinate status, and therefore it was necessary to remove it from the equation.

Xi Xia is an interesting comparison with Uyghuristan. The *idiqu* (ruler) of Uyghuristan submitted to Chinggis Khan in person in 1209. The *idiqu* did so because he saw the Mongols as a rising power. Prior to 1209, Uyghuristan had been part of the Kara Khitai Empire. However, Kara Khitai was a declining power. This was clearly demonstrated when the Naiman, who fled from the Mongols, pillaged Uyghuristan but then received refuge in Kara Khitai. The Naiman leader, Guchulug, even married the daughter of the *gur-khan* (ruler) of Kara Khitai. Recognizing the *gur-khan's* weakness, the *idiqu* submitted to Chinggis Khan. The Qarluqs of Almaliq, another tributary of Kara Khitai, also submitted for similar reasons. The Uyghurs and Qarluqs proved to be loyal subjects. It was not until the Toluid Revolution that a Uyghur ruler found himself on the wrong side of the Mongol khan. In this instance, it was purely a political issue and not due to rebellion.

Unlike Xi Xia, which submitted after a few years of raiding, the Jin Empire resisted for over two decades. The Mongols began invading it in 1211. There is little indication that they sought to conquer it. Rather, the raids appear to be simply that—raids to acquire booty as well as to secure certain mountain passes that the Jin could use to invade Mongolia. Gradually, however, the destruction caused by the Mongols forced them to penetrate deeper into Jin territory to gain plunder. Additionally, dissident groups, such

as the Khitan, deserted to the Mongols, as did various commanders and officials from the Jin Empire. Whether they did so as opportunists or simply because they were convinced that Chinggis Khan was a more effective ruler than the Jin emperor (regardless of which individual sat on the throne) varied with each person. Nonetheless, the lack of an effective response by the Jin emperors certainly didn't instill confidence in any but the most loyal. An example of this is when the Jin emperor abandoned the capital of Zhongdu. Although Zhongdu was so large that the Mongols could not surround it, the emperor abandoned the city during a period secured by a peace treaty. He moved farther south to Kaifeng. Chinggis Khan viewed this as a violation of the peace treaty and invaded and captured the city. Still, with a vast population, territorial depth, and resiliency, the Jin Empire was able to hold out until 1234, seven years after the death of Chinggis Khan. The defeat of the Jin Empire counters the image of swift conquests by the Mongols but also demonstrates their perseverance.

While the Mongols were engaged with the Jin Empire, their armies also were active elsewhere. The Mongols curiously avoided Kara Khitai until 1218. Guchulug and the Naiman took refuge there as early as 1209, but the Mongols made no effort to deal with him until after he usurped the throne. Quite possibly their avoidance was due to their activities in Xi Xia and the Jin Empire as well as with rebellions by the Forest People. In 1218, a Mongol army led by Jebe invaded Kara Khitai. The population rejoiced and viewed the Mongols as an army not of conquest but rather of liberation. The Mongols pursued Guchulug until he was killed by a local notable. With his death, the Mongols incorporated Kara Khitai into the Mongol Empire, bringing their borders to the Syr Darya River.

Now the Mongol Empire shared a border with another nascent empire, the Khwarazmian Empire. Khwarazm, a region west of the Amu Darya and south of the Aral Sea, had been a frontier province of the Seljuk Empire but rose to prominence in the late 12th century and the 13th centuries. A suspicion, probably accurate, that Mongol-sponsored merchants were actually spies triggered a massacre and confiscation of property by the Khwarazmian officials in the border city of Otrar. Chinggis Khan's vengeance was quick. Delegating the conquest of the Jin Empire to a subordinate, he led his main army over 1,000 miles to invade the Khwarazmian Empire in 1219. Within two years, a once dynamic and powerful empire had been erased from the map and largely forgotten in history.

As part of the campaign against the Khwarazmian Empire, the Mongols became active in the Kipchak steppes. After the death of the Khwarazmian ruler, Sultan Muhammad II, a Mongol army continued westward to explore and eventually cross the Caucasus Mountains. Once in the Kipchak steppes, they engaged the Kipchak nomads and defeated them. Other Mongol forces were also active near the Volga River. The major effort to conquer the western portion of the Kipchak steppes occurred in 1236 as part of a campaign that took the Mongols as far as Hungary and Poland. With the incorporation of the Kipchak steppes, the Mongols gained a troop reservoir of additional nomads for their armies as well as additional pasture and territory for their families and livestock. The Kipchak steppes would become the core territory of the Golden Horde.

Meanwhile, the aftershocks of the fall of the Khwarazmian Empire continued well after its initial incorporation into the Mongol Empire. Muhammad II Khwarazmshah's son, Jalal al-Din, attempted to resurrect the Khwarazmian Empire but was forced to abandon those efforts in eastern Iran because they attracted the Mongols' attention. In western Iran he had more success, but it was ephemeral. The Mongols once again paid attention to his efforts and moved to squash his fledgling kingdom. This effort then led to the conquest of Transcaucasia. One state that had at least some sympathies toward Jalal al-Din was the Byzantine kingdom of Trebizond. Established in the aftermath of the Fourth Crusade, in which an army of crusaders captured Constantinople in 1204, Trebizond forged an independent path on the southern shores of the Black Sea. When the Mongols defeated the Seljuk Turks of Rum at Kose Dagh in 1243, they did not forget Trebizond. While there is scant information about Trebizond's submission, representatives of Trebizond attended the coronation of both Guyuk and Mongke.

While Mongol armies conquered the Kipchak steppes, Ogodei also sent armies against the Song Empire. During the war with the Jin Empire, the Song Empire was an ally of the Mongols. In the final years, though, tensions arose with the Song when they attempted to seize territory that the Mongols claimed. Shortly after the end of the Jin Empire in 1234, the Mongols invaded the Song Empire. The war with the Song was much different from any of the Mongols' previous conflicts. The terrain was vastly different, with numerous mountains, terraced slopes, and rice paddies. Combined with a much warmer climate and greater humidity, it was unlike any other place the Mongols invaded. On top of this, the Song Empire possessed a population surpassing 50 million people and was the most technologically advanced state in the world.

So difficult was this war that it would take more than 40 years for the Mongols to conquer the Song Empire. The northern defenses were great enough that Mongke Khan sent his brother Khubilai to open another front on the southwestern border. To do so, Khubilai needed to conquer the kingdom of Dali, which was situated in the region now known as Yunnan in southwestern China. The Mongols successfully conquered Yunnan and stationed a large number of troops there. This deployment was not only to open another front in the war with the Song but also because Yunnan offered suitable pasturelands for the Mongols, unlike much of China. Yunnan also offered the Yuan Empire a base for operations in Southeast Asia.

Even with a new invasion route from the southwest, the Song Empire resisted and outlasted the efforts of three Mongol khans (Ogodei, Guyuk, and Mongke). Khubilai, however, finally ended the Song Empire. The key obstacle was the fortified city of Xiangyang. Only with great help and military technology imported from the Middle East and the adoption of a navy were the Mongols able to conquer the city. This victory then opened the way for the conquest of the rest of the Song Empire.

While the Mongols rarely had success in Southeast Asia, the northeast was a different matter. With the conquest of the Jin Empire, the Mongols also ventured into Koryo (modern-day Korea). Although they conquered it, Koryo proved to be a reluctant vassal. It was not until the reign of Khubilai Khan that Korea could be said to be part of the Mongol Empire.

When Mongke took the throne, he renewed the conquest of the Song Empire and also sent his brother Hulegu with a large army to finish matters in the Middle East. Not only did he destroy the Assassins, but Hulegu also moved against the Abbasid Caliphate. The Abbasid Caliphate at this time was a much-reduced power and really only controlled central and southern Iraq, but it still had grandiose pretensions. Although Caliph Mustasim wrote that the entire Muslim world would rise up against the Mongols, no one came to his aid. Dissension within Baghdad, the capital of the caliphate, allowed highly placed officials to send the Mongols intelligence on the Abbasid military. In the end, the Mongols capture Baghdad, and the caliph was executed.

From Baghdad, the Mongols moved on to Syria. From the onset, it appeared that Syria would become part of the Mongol conquests. The city of Aleppo fell after a siege of five days, and Damascus surrendered after Sultan al-Nasir fled. Despite their success, the Mongol hold on Syria was tenuous due to the rise of the Mamluk Sultanate. Although the Mamluk Sultanate received the same diplomatic summons of “surrender or die,” its ruler, Sultan Qutuz, not only killed the envoys but also decided to attack the Mongols. Although he defeated the Mongols at Ayn Jalut, he was murdered shortly thereafter. Nonetheless, the Mamluk Sultanate proved to be a bulwark against Mongol expansion in the west.

Although the Mamluk Sultanate was one of the few powers that invaded the Mongol Empire, Lithuania challenged the Golden Horde without necessarily invading the Mongol Empire. Direct military confrontation was rare, but Lithuania was able to assert its influence and control over Golden Horde territory. It became a direct competitor and rival for the Golden Horde in the late 13th century and the 14th century. As the Golden Horde fragmented in the 15th century, Lithuania became one of the successor states that sought to fill the vacuum in the steppes.

While this is but a small sampling of the polities and places that comprised the world of the Mongol Empire, it demonstrates the variety that existed. While some states survived the Mongol Empire, they usually did so in a form much different from how they began.

Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258)

Destroyed by the Mongols in 1258, the Abbasid Caliphate was the titular and symbolic center of the Islamic world for Sunni Muslims. Taking its name from Muhammad’s uncle, Abbas ibn Abd al-Muttalib, the Abbasid caliphs based their claim to the throne through this family connection to the Prophet Muhammad (d. 632). By the time the Mongols encountered the Abbasid Caliphate in the 13th century, it was a shadow of its former self. Although it had once stretched from the Mediterranean to Afghanistan, in the 13th century its temporal authority only extended into much of modern-day Iraq and spilled into western Iran. Although it remained the spiritual center and Baghdad remained a city without peer, the caliphate had passed its golden age. Nonetheless, its symbolic importance as well as its commercial and intellectual significance maintained the caliphate’s power.

The caliphate arose with the Abbasid Revolution, which overthrew the Umayyad Caliphate (661–750). Originating in Khurasan, the Abbasids were less tied to the Arabocentric policies and views of the Umayyads. The Abbasids successfully overthrew the Umayyads by tapping into various sources of disaffection with Umayyad rule, including the Shia Muslims. While the Abbasids were originally revolutionary and there seemed to be the possibility of rapprochement with the Shia Muslims, it was not to be. Shia persecution still occurred, and gradually the caliph lost his religious authority, which passed to the *'umma*, the learned religious scholars.

One of the crowning achievements of the Abbasids was the creation of Baghdad in 762. Rather than using the former Umayyad capital of Damascus, the Abbasids built a new capital. It was more central for their empire and rapidly became the cultural, commercial, and educational center par excellence in the Islamic world.

Unfortunately for the Abbasids, just as they gradually conceded the loss of religious authority (although the caliph remained a religious figurehead), the caliphs also lost temporal authority. Part of this was due to the size of the empire. The Abbasids simply did not have the infrastructure to effectively rule the entire empire and gradually



Tower and courtyard of the ribat in Monastir, Tunisia, built during the reign of the Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid, 786–809 CE. The ribat was largely rebuilt in the 11th century. By the time the Mongols conquered the Abbasid Caliphate, its power was largely reduced to the environs of Iraq, a far cry from its halcyon era under Harun al-Rashid. Nonetheless, it still had a certain amount of mystique. (Evgeniy Fesenko/Dreamstime.com)

conceded authority to local dynasts. Initially they were just confirmed as governors, but after a few generations the local dynasts ruled on their own, such as the Samanids (819–999) in Central Asia and the Saffarids (861–1003) in Iran.

The caliph's weakness became endemic, and eventually the caliphate itself came under the control of the Buyid (934–1062) family from Daylam in northern Iran, who were Shia Muslims. The caliphate was perhaps at its weakness in 1050 when Caliph al-Qa'im (1031–1075) requested help from the the Seljuk Turks, who had recently converted to Sunni Islam.

The Seljuks liberated Baghdad, but the caliph discovered that he now had a new master. Despite their religiosity, the Seljuks lacked interest in relinquishing authority, and the Abbasids could not challenge the Seljuks militarily, as their empire stretched from Central Asia into Syria and Anatolia, where the Seljuks of Rum became an offshoot of the empire. While the Seljuks wielded temporal power, they did so in the name of the caliph, thus providing the caliph with some legitimacy.

Gradually the caliphate accumulated some strength and independent authority as the Seljuk Sultanate fractured into civil war during the 12th century. The Abbasids even fended off Seljuk attacks on Baghdad. During the reign of Caliph al-Nasir (r. 1180–1225), the Abbasids regained control of much of Iraq and even extended his authority into Iran. In this arena, however, he ran afoul of the Khwarazmian Empire. Sultan Muhammad II Khwarazmshah (1200–1220) even launched an attack on Baghdad, but an early winter blunted its effectiveness.

According to legend, Caliph al-Nasir's fear of the Khwarazmian threat was so great that he allied with Chinggis Khan against the Khwarazmian Empire. While most Islamic sources acknowledge the role of the Otrar Massacre, there are some who suggest that Caliph al-Nasir was responsible for inviting the Mongols to attack the Khwarazmian Empire.

Once in the Middle East, the Mongols did have continuing contact with the Abbasid Empire after Caliph al-Nasir died in 1225. One of Chormaqan's objectives was to conquer Baghdad. While successful in Iran and Transcaucasia, Chormaqan only sent raids against the Abbasid Caliphate, which may also be seen as a sign of the Abbasids' military virility at this point. Al-Nasir's successor, Mustansir (1226–1242), successfully guided the caliphate by fending off Mongol attacks while also not offending them into retaliation. However, his son and the last true caliph of the Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, al-Musta'sim (1242–1258) lacked his father's skills.

Caliph al-Musta'sim came to the throne during a lull in Mongol military actions, as Ogodei died in 1241 and a successor (Guyuk) was not selected until 1246. Rather than looking to find a lasting peace (if that was even possible) with the Mongols, he spent more of his time indulging in pleasure activities, particularly pigeon racing. When Hulegu advanced, al-Musta'sim responded with letters laced with an undeserved arrogance. This only provoked the Mongols further, and the Siege of Baghdad in 1258 left him with not only a destroyed city but also his own death: being rolled into a carpet and trampled. Most of his sons were also killed.

Relatives resurfaced in Cairo in the Mamluk Sultanate. Here they became puppets and were used primarily to legitimize the Mamluk sultans and trotted out for ceremonial

AN UNEXPECTED ALLIANCE

In a number of Islamic sources, a rumor persisted that Caliph al-Nasir invited Chinggis Khan to invade the Khwarazmian Empire. In some ways this was reminiscent of when Caliph al-Qa'im requested aid from the Seljuk Turks. The difference was that Sultan Muhammad II Khwarazmshah did not rule Baghdad. He did, however, find it to be a nuisance and a rival for his authority in western Iran. Thus, he attempted to invade it in 1218. An early winter frustrated his plan and froze many of his troops.

Despite the seemingly divine intervention, Caliph al-Nasir allegedly sought a power ally against the Khwarazmians. According to the persistent legend, he shaved a servant's head and tattooed a message on it. After waiting several months for the servant's hair to return, al-Nasir sent the messenger on his way to Chinggis Khan. The Khwarazmians intercepted him, but finding no letters or evidence that he had a message to relate to Chinggis Khan, they sent him on his way.

Once the messenger was in the presence of the Mongol leader he asked for his head to be shaved to reveal the message, which even he did not know what it said. Delighted at the message, Chinggis Khan decided to invade.

There is, however, no evidence that such a message existed. All of the sources agree that the Otrar Massacre is what prompted Chinggis Khan to invade. Other apocryphal stories persisted, but it was the events at Otrar that decided the Khwarazmian Empire's fate.

purposes. With the Ottoman Empire's victory over the Mamluks in 1517, the Abbasid Caliphate truly came to an end.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Hulegu; *Key Events:* Otrar Massacre; *Military:* Baghdad, Siege of; Chormaqan Noyan; *Key Places:* Kara Khitai; Khwarazmian Empire; Mamluk Sultanate; *Primary Documents:* Document 24; Document 25

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Antioch, Principality of

The Principality of Antioch was a Frankish state in northern Syria, established in 1098 by the armies of the First Crusade and surviving until 1268. With its capital at the city

of Antioch (modern-day Antakya, Turkey), the principality of the same name consisted of much of the northwest of the modern-day state of Syria as well as the province of Hatay in the southeastern part of Turkey.

The prospect of material gain, in addition to the spiritual reward offered by Pope Urban II at the Council of Clermont, was a strong motivating factor for the leaders of the First Crusade from southern Italy, Bohemond I of Taranto (son of Robert Guiscard) and his nephew Tancred of Lecce. Upon his arrival in Constantinople in 1097, Bohemond took the oath required by the Byzantine emperor, Alexius I Comnenus, and promised not to lay claim to any former part of the empire that the crusade might conquer. However, during the siege of the city of Antioch (1097–1098), Bohemond obtained a pledge from the other crusade leaders that he would be allowed to keep Antioch if he could take it and if Alexius would not come in person to reclaim it. Bohemond then used his contacts with Firuz, a military commander in Antioch, to enter and take the city except for the citadel. After the crusaders' victory over Karbugha of Mosul (June 28, 1098), the citadel surrendered. On November 5, 1098, the council of the crusade leaders confirmed Bohemond's claim to Antioch, and when the main army of the crusade resumed its march south in January 1099, Bohemond stayed in Antioch.

Bohemond's new territory, the second Frankish state established in the east after the County of Edessa (1098), had been a Byzantine province until the Arab conquest of the seventh century, and in 1085 the Seljuks had seized the region. The Principality of Antioch was bordered in the north by the plains of Cilicia and the Taurus Mountains; in the west by the Mediterranean Sea; in the south by the future County of Tripoli, the Muslim emirate of Homs, and the lands of the Assassins; and in the east by the County of Edessa and the Muslim emirate of Aleppo. The principality remained the target of Muslim reconquest until the 1170s, when Saladin shifted his attention to the south. Antioch, the capital city, was well fortified, with its 360 towers dating back to the Byzantine period. It was connected to the Mediterranean Sea through the port of St. Simeon (modern-day Suveydiye, Turkey). As a commercial center Antioch was not as important as Acre or the coastal cities of Cilicia, but it was famous for its aqueducts, gardens, baths, and sewers as well as for the good relationship between its various ethnic and religious groups: Franks, Syrians, Greeks, Jews, Armenians, and Muslim Arabs. Bohemond I's court resembled that of most Western rulers and featured the typical household officers: constable, marshal, chamberlain, and chancellor. The Italo-Norman laws of the principality, known as the *Assizes of Antioch*, have survived in a 13th-century Armenian translation, since Cilician Armenia later adopted these same laws.

On Christmas 1099 when Bohemond was in Jerusalem to fulfill his pilgrim's vow, Patriarch Daimbert of Jerusalem invested him with the Principality of Antioch, thus completely disregarding the oath that Bohemond had taken before Emperor Alexius. Bohemond had tolerated a Greek Orthodox patriarch in Antioch, but Daimbert insisted on installing Latin prelates in Tarsos, Artah, and Mamistra. Consequently, the Greek patriarch, John of Oxeia, retired to Constantinople, and Bernard of Valence became the first Latin patriarch of Antioch. After the death of Godfrey of Bouillon (1100), Daimbert tried to prevent Baldwin I (of Boulogne), count of Edessa, from assuming the rulership over Jerusalem by calling on Bohemond to intercept Baldwin's travel; however,

Daimbert's message never reached Bohemond. In August 1100 during an attempt to secure the northern borders of his principality, Bohemond was captured by the Danishmendids under Malik Ghazi of Sebasteia.

As early as September 1100, a newly arrived papal legate, Maurice of Porto, offered the regency of the principality to Tancred, who was then ruling Galilee. However, Tancred only agreed on March 8, 1101, after he had received guarantees for his possessions in the Kingdom of Jerusalem from King Baldwin I. The Lombard expedition in the Crusade of 1101 intended to free Bohemond I, who was imprisoned at Niksar, but it was crushed east of the Halys River, near Merzifon, by the Turks. As regent of Antioch, Tancred conquered Cilicia from Byzantium and managed to take Laodikeia in Syria in the spring of 1103 after a siege of a year and a half. He was, however, unable to stop Raymond IV (Raymond of Saint-Gilles) from taking Tortosa, south of Laodikeia, and from beginning the siege of Tripoli. Tancred did not actively pursue Bohemond's release from captivity, which was accomplished in 1103 after Baldwin II, count of Edessa, concerned about Tancred's increasing power, successfully raised the money for the ransom.

In 1104 as part of a campaign against Riwan of Aleppo, Bohemond, together with Tancred, Baldwin II of Edessa, and Joscelin I of Courtenay, attacked the fortress of Harran, southeast of Edessa, in order to establish a buffer that would separate eastern Anatolia, Syria, and Iraq. The combined Frankish army suffered a complete defeat, and Baldwin and Joscelin were captured. Tancred became regent in Edessa. The Byzantines took the opportunity to reconquer Cilicia and take the port and lower city (though not the citadel) of Laodikeia. Bohemond saw his principality in danger and decided to return to the west to assemble allies and supplies. He entrusted Tancred with Antioch, who in turn left the regency of Edessa to his cousin Richard of the Principate. In 1107, Bohemond crossed the Adriatic Sea and laid siege to the Byzantine port of Dyrrachion (modern-day Durre, Albania). However, he lacked a fleet that could match that of the Byzantine Empire, and the siege failed. In 1108 in the Treaty of Devol (whose text is given in Anna Comnena's *Alexiad*), Bohemond had to agree to return Laodikeia and Cilicia to Alexius, to receive his principality as a vassal of the Byzantine Empire, and to restore the Greek patriarch of Antioch to his see. In return, Alexius promised him the yet to be conquered territories around Aleppo. After this treaty, Bohemond did not dare to show his face in the east and returned to Apulia.

Tancred continued his regency over Antioch, ignoring the Treaty of Devol, and he expanded the principality by conquering Artah (1105), Apamea (1106), Mamistra (1107/1108), Laodikeia (1108), Valania (1109), and Jabala (1109). In 1108 when Baldwin II of Edessa and Joscelin I of Courtenay were released from captivity, a quarrel began between them and Tancred over Edessa. For the first time, the Franks entered into opposing alliances with the Turkish amirs of northern Syria. Militarily Tancred prevailed, but Baldwin II was able to regain control over Edessa. After Bohemond's death in Apulia in 1111, Tancred continued to rule Antioch on behalf of Bohemond's son (Bohemond II), who was still a minor. When Tancred died in 1112, Roger of Antioch (also called Roger of Salerno), the son of Tancred's cousin Richard of the principate, succeeded him as regent of Antioch.

At least initially, Roger seems to have continued Tancred's successful military activities. In 1115, the principality was threatened by Bursuq ibn Bursuq of Hamadan, a Turkish general in the service of the Seljuk sultan Muammad. In a spectacular military expedition, Roger ambushed and defeated Bursuq's army at Tell Danith, between Apamea and Aleppo (September 14, 1115). When LuLu, the *atabeg* of Aleppo, was murdered in 1117, Roger tried to prevent the takeover of Aleppo by the city's Muslim neighbors. In 1119, the Artuqid prince Ilghazi of Mardin first paid for a truce with Antioch but then allied himself with Tughtigin of Damascus and returned to attack the principality. Rather than waiting for help from Jerusalem and Tripoli, Roger decided to respond on his own. He met Ilghazi near al-Balat, west of Aleppo, with 700 knights and 3,000 foot soldiers. On June 27, 1119, the Franks were thoroughly defeated, and almost all, including Roger, were killed. Contemporaries referred to the battle and its site as the Battle of Ager Sanguinis (Field of Blood). Details of the campaign are related in Walter the Chancellor's *Bella Antiochena*.

The Antiochene nobles called upon King Baldwin II of Jerusalem (the former count of Edessa) to assume the regency. The contract of regency ensured that the principality and its lordships would remain under Antiochene control, held in trust on behalf of Bohemond I's son, and not be handed over to the nobility of the Kingdom of Jerusalem. In April 1123, Baldwin II himself was captured in northern Syria while trying to aid Edessa against Aleppo. In Antioch, the patriarch Bernard of Valence took over as regent until the summer of 1124, when the king was released from captivity. In Baldwin's absence, the Franks allied with the Venetians had managed to conquer Tyre, which brought about new problems between Jerusalem and Antioch. Traditionally, the archdiocese of Tyre had formed part of the patriarchate of Antioch. However, it was the position of the papacy that political and ecclesiastical boundaries should coincide; the problem was that some of the bishoprics in the archdiocese of Tyre were in the territory of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, while others were not. The pope decided in favor of Jerusalem, and the archbishop of Tyre became a subordinate of the patriarch of Jerusalem, while the bishoprics remained divided between Jerusalem and the states of northern Syria.

In 1126, Bohemond II arrived from Apulia to take over his father's inheritance. The following year he married Alice of Jerusalem, one of Baldwin II's daughters. Only four years after his arrival in the east, Bohemond II died fighting in Cilicia (February 1130). In the following years, his widow, Alice, left with their infant daughter, Constance, repeatedly tried to take over the government. However, her father, Baldwin II, resumed the regency until his own death (1131). When Alice made an attempt to become regent in 1131, she was aided by Edessa and Tripoli, but the new king of Jerusalem, Fulk, came to Antioch almost instantly to take over the regency (1132). Fulk entrusted the affairs of the principality to one of its chief barons, Reynald Mazoir. In 1133, the Antiochene nobility asked Fulk to select a husband for Constance, and the king's choice fell upon Raymond of Poitiers, a son of William IX of Aquitaine, but it was three years before he arrived in the east. In 1135, Alice made another attempt to gain control over Antioch. Her ally was the new uncanonically elected patriarch, Ralph of Dom-front. However, when Alice offered her daughter Constance as a bride to Prince Manuel I Comnenus of

Byzantium, she encountered resistance from the patriarch, who feared that he could be replaced by a Greek. Raymond of Poitiers arrived at Antioch in 1136, and Ralph saw to it that he was married to Constance. Alice retreated to Laodikeia. A few years later (1140), Patriarch Ralph, whose intrigues continued, was deposed by a council and succeeded by Aimery de Limoges. Raymond of Poitiers's court at Antioch was a cultural center: *Les Chétifs*, an Old French verse epic, was composed there shortly before 1149.

The Byzantine emperors continued to hope that they could assert their overlordship of the principality or possibly even annex it outright. As they regarded themselves as protectors of the sizable Greek Orthodox population, another Byzantine aim was to restore a Greek patriarch in the city of Antioch. In 1137, Emperor John II Comnenus intervened to press his claims with regard to the principality. Raymond was forced to negotiate: he had to do homage to John and to agree to hand Antioch over to the emperor should John manage to conquer Aleppo, Shaizar, and Homs and thus carve out a new territory for Raymond. In 1138, aided by Edessa and Antioch, John launched an attack against Imad al-Din Zangi, ruler of Mosul and Aleppo. When it became evident that the Franks were only lending lukewarm support, John returned to Antioch and laid claim to the city. However, Joscelin II of Edessa orchestrated a popular uprising that forced John to leave the city. He retreated to Constantinople but returned in 1142. This time the bishop of Jabala, acting on behalf of the pope and the western emperor, rejected the Byzantine claims, an indication that the states of Outremer were considered the business of Christendom as a whole. In the following year John died as a result of a hunting accident and Raymond invaded Cilicia, but in 1144 the new Byzantine emperor, John's son Manuel I Comnenus, retaliated by invading the principality; Raymond was forced to travel to Constantinople and do homage. With the conquest of the city of Edessa by Zangi on December 25, 1144, Antioch's eastern border lay open to invasions from its Muslim neighbors. In 1148 during the Second Crusade, Raymond tried to convince King Louis VII of France to join him in a campaign against Zangi's son and successor, Nur al-Din. However, Louis did not consider their joint forces strong enough, and the alleged affair of his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, with Raymond, her uncle, did not help to build trust. The crusade's attack on Damascus temporarily distracted Nur al-Din, but in the summer of 1149 he appeared before the Antiochene castle of Inab. Raymond confronted him in battle on June 29, 1149, and was defeated and killed.

Raymond's widow Constance assumed the regency for their children, who were still minors. Her main adviser was the Latin patriarch Aimery de Limoges. Despite considerable pressure from King Baldwin III of Jerusalem, Constance refused to take a new husband until 1153, when she married Reynald of Châtillon, a French nobleman. Reynald turned against the patriarch (who may have objected to the marriage), had him imprisoned, and only released him when King Baldwin intervened on his behalf. In 1156, Reynald and Prince Toros II of Cilicia attacked the Byzantine island of Cyprus, which they pillaged thoroughly. In February 1158 Reynald, aided by Baldwin III and Count Thierry of Flanders, captured the fortress of Harenc, an important stronghold on Orontes River. In the fall of 1158, Manuel I Comnenus decided to renew his pressure

on Antioch and moved with his troops into Cilicia. In order to preempt the impending humiliation, Reynald traveled to Manuel and promised to both surrender the citadel of Antioch to him and install a Greek patriarch (the latter did not come to pass). On April 12, 1159, Manuel entered Antioch in triumph. But then to the shock of the Frankish states, Manuel and Nur al-Din concluded an agreement, an alliance that from Byzantium's perspective was intended to provide a check to the Franks of Outremer and to keep the Anatolian Turks under control. On November 23, 1161, during a raid against Nur al-Din's territory, Reynald was captured. He spent the following 16 years in prison in Aleppo. Instead of turning to Byzantium, the Antiochene barons asked the king of Jerusalem for assistance. Baldwin III entrusted Patriarch Aimery with the regency, which pleased neither Byzantium nor Constance. To strengthen his claim over Antioch, Manuel married Constance's daughter Maria. However, in 1163/1164 the Antiochene barons expelled Constance and installed Bohemond III, the son of Constance and Raymond of Poitiers, as the prince of Antioch.

Bohemond at first only controlled Laodikeia, but by March 1164 he was successfully established in Antioch. In August 1164, Nur al-Din defeated the armies of Antioch and Tripoli near Artah, capturing Bohemond and Count Raymond III of Tripoli, and regained the fortress of Harenc, thus turning the Orontes into the definite eastern border of the principality. It seems that Manuel was instrumental in bringing about Bohemond's release from captivity (1165). In return, Bohemond had to install a Greek patriarch in Antioch. The ties between Antioch and Constantinople were further strengthened when Bohemond married Theodora, Manuel's great-niece. However, after Manuel's death (1180), Bohemond separated from her and married his mistress Sibylla. Consequently, Patriarch Aimery excommunicated him and placed Antioch under an interdict, whereupon Bohemond laid siege to the castle of Qusair to which Aimery had retreated; an agreement was mediated by Patriarch Eraclius of Jerusalem. Bohemond then turned on the Antiochene nobles who had supported Aimery, but most of them seem to have fled to Cilicia.

Bohemond III's son Raymond fought in the Battle of Hattin (1187), where the Franks of Outremer were defeated by Saladin, and managed to escape, together with Raymond III of Tripoli. As Saladin continued his conquests, Bohemond was among the first who called on the west for help. Saladin was unable to take the important Antiochene castle of Margat, which the Knights Hospitaller had just acquired from the Mazoir family. However, since the Muslim reconquest of Laodikeia in 1187, the Principality of Antioch had been physically separated from the Frankish states to the south (Tripoli and Jerusalem). The city of Antioch was only saved because a Sicilian fleet arrived just in time. In 1190 the body of the Holy Roman emperor Frederick I Barbarossa was buried in the cathedral of Antioch, and his son Duke Frederick V of Swabia, who was married to Constance, a great-granddaughter of Bohemond II, left a contingent of 300 knights and his treasure in Antioch. It seems that Bohemond III entered into a feudal relationship with the western empire, maybe with the intention of establishing a *regnum Antiochenum* (kingdom of Antioch); after all, Emperor Henry VI would soon elevate Cyprus (1197) and Cilicia (1198) to the rank of kingdoms. During the Third Crusade, the Principality of Antioch as well as the County of Tripoli remained neutral;

they were, however, included in the truce between Saladin and King Richard the Lion-hearted of England (1192).

Count Raymond III of Tripoli died shortly after the Battle of Hattin. He had designated his godchild Raymond of Antioch, Bohemond III's oldest son, as his successor; Bohemond, however, decided to give Tripoli to his youngest son and namesake, Bohemond IV. In 1194, Leon II of Cilicia captured Bohemond III but was unable to seize the city of Antioch because of the successful resistance of the newly formed commune there. The Antiochenes called on Henry of Champagne, the ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, for help, and Henry traveled to Cilicia, where he successfully negotiated Bohemond III's freedom in exchange for Cilicia's release from its vassal status toward Antioch. As a token of their reconciliation, Raymond of Antioch married Alice, Leon's niece, but Raymond died shortly after Alice had given birth to their son, Raymond-Rupen.

When Bohemond III died in 1201, both his youngest son Bohemond IV, count of Tripoli, and Leon of Cilicia, acting on behalf of Raymond-Rupen, his great-nephew as well as Bohemond III's grandson, laid claim to the Principality of Antioch. Raymond-Rupen was supported by Pope Innocent III, who intended to preserve the fragile union between the Roman and Armenian churches (since 1198); the high nobility of Antioch, who emphasized the rule of primogeniture customary in the principality, and Sultan al-Adil of Egypt and Syria supported Raymond-Rupen. Bohemond IV had the endorsement of Aleppo (until Innocent III's call for a new crusade in 1213) and of the commune of Antioch, particularly because its Greek members resented the Armenians. Bohemond IV was able to establish himself in Antioch. Since the overthrow of the Byzantine Empire by the Fourth Crusade in 1204 now made Greek claims on the church of Antioch unlikely, Bohemond lent his support to a Greek patriarch in the city (1207–1213). This and the commune's taxation plans so antagonized the Latin clergy that they switched over to Leon's side. Leon then agreed to a marriage between his daughter Stephanie and Raymond-Rupen. In 1216, Raymond-Rupen was able to supplant Bohemond in Antioch. Bohemond then participated in the Fifth Crusade (1217–1221). Raymond-Rupen did not hold Antioch for long. In 1219 he was dethroned by a revolt, whereupon Bohemond IV returned and ruled until his death in 1233. From this time, the County of Tripoli and the Principality of Antioch remained under joint rule.

After the death of Leon II (1219), Cilicia was shaken by a succession crisis, and between 1222 and 1224, Philip of Antioch, a son of Bohemond IV, was even married to Isabella, one of Leon's daughters. The marriage was, however, dissolved when the regent of Cilicia, Constantine of Lampron, decided to have his own son marry Isabella. In 1228 when Emperor Frederick II demanded an oath of homage from Bohemond IV, the latter pretended insanity and thus avoided the oath. Antioch remained neutral in the dispute between Frederick and the Ibelin family that occurred in the Kingdom of Jerusalem in the 1230s. For the next three decades northern Syria nearly disappears from the historical record, and it seems that there was a significant economic decline. Bohemond IV's son, Bohemond V, who ruled the principality between 1233 and 1251, found himself entangled in the military expeditions of the Knights Templar and Knights Hospitaller who controlled significant portions of the Antiochene frontier. The nobility

of Antioch and Tripoli also participated in the Battle of Forbie (1244), the most catastrophic defeat of the Franks of Outremer since Hattin. Bohemond V rarely visited Antioch and preferred Tripoli as his residence.

At the behest of King Louis IX of France, Bohemond V's son, Bohemond VI, married Sibyl, a daughter of King Hetum of Cilicia. This marriage alliance drew Antioch into Cilicia's allegiance to the Mongols. Both Hetum and Bohemond VI assisted with the Mongol conquest of Aleppo and Damascus (1260). In the shadow of the Mongol advance, Bohemond was able to regain Laodikeia, but since the Mongols realized the importance of the Greeks, he had to accept a Greek patriarch in Antioch; this earned him an excommunication from Rome. Opizo, the Latin patriarch of Antioch, left his see and moved to the west, where he continued to reside with a titular claim until 1292. When the Mamluks defeated the Mongols at the Battle of Ayn Jalut (1260), Antioch lost a powerful ally and became one of the next objectives of Mamluk retaliation. On May 19, 1268, after a four-day siege, Sultan Baybars I conquered the city of Antioch, destroyed it, and deported its population. In the same year, the Templars abandoned their castles in the Antiochene Amanus march.

Both Bohemond VI and his son Bohemond VII, who continued to rule Tripoli, maintained their titular claims to the Principality of Antioch. The Hospitaller castle of Margat held out until 1285, when it was conquered by Sultan Qalawun. Finally, on April 20, 1287, Qalawun's army took Laodikeia, the last significant city of the former principality.

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See also: *Key Places:* Sultanate of Rum

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Delhi Sultanate

The Delhi Sultanate was a series of Turko-Afghan Muslim dynasties that ruled India from Delhi during the 12th through 16th centuries. The sultanate has its origins in the capture of Delhi by Muhammad Ghuri in 1192. Following Ghuri's assassination in 1206, one of his generals who had been a slave in the military, Qutb-ud-Din Aybak, declared himself sultan; this was the beginning of the slave dynasty and the Delhi Sultanate.

Qutb-ud-Din's successor, Iltutmish, had also been a slave in the military. Iltutmish succeeded Qutb-ud-Din in 1211. During his reign, Iltutmish kept the Mongol army out of Delhi and took several strategic cities. After Iltutmish died in 1236, he was succeeded by his daughter, Sultana Raziyya. However, she was deposed after only a few years. Following a power struggle, Ghiyas-ud-Din Balban gained effective control of the government in 1246 and officially became sultan 20 years later. Balban continued to keep the Mongol army at bay during his reign, which lasted until 1287.

The slave dynasty finally fell in 1290 when Jalal-ud-Din Firuz Khalji took control, beginning the Khalji dynasty. He was soon murdered and succeeded by his nephew, Ala-ud-Din Khalji, who led conquests all over India and spread Islamic rule throughout the subcontinent. As his predecessors had done, Ala-ud-Din held off the Mongols and expanded the sultanate's power base.

In 1325, the Tughluq dynasty replaced the Khalji dynasty. The Tughluq dynasty was founded by Ghiyas-ud-Din Tughluq, but he was soon replaced by Muhammad ibn Tughluq, who tried to reorganize several administrative aspects of the sultanate. Initially, he also continued the expansion of the empire. Muhammad was an unpopular ruler, though, and his reign saw many revolts. By the time of his death in 1351, much of the territory that he and previous sultans had gained was once again under Hindu control, including the Deccan plateau in southern India, which was controlled by the newly established Bahmani Sultanate.



Tomb of Iltutmish at Qutb Minar in Delhi. Iltutmish ruled the Delhi Sultanate from 1211 until his death in 1236. During his reign, he kept the Mongol army out of Delhi and expanded the power of the Sultanate over northern India. (Bill Perry/Shutterstock.com)

Muhammad ibn Tughluq's successors were unable to maintain a unified empire, and central control was gradually reduced. The Delhi Sultanate was effectively ruined when the Turko-Mongolian leader Timur sacked Delhi in 1398. The Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451) followed the Tughluq dynasty and was in turn followed by the Lodi dynasty (1451–1526), but neither could claim much real power. The Delhi Sultanate was ended once and for all with the establishment of the Mughal Empire following the First Battle of Panipat in 1526.

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See also: *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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Jin Empire (1125–1234)

The Jin Empire was founded by the Jurchen, a Manchu-Tungus group, directly ancestral to the later Qing dynasty (1644–1911) Manchus, and the successors to the preceding Liao dynasty. The name Jin was written with the character for gold and hence why the Mongols referred to the ruler as the Altan Khan (Golden Khan). The Liao were ruled by the Khitan nomads, an Altaic group. This was in direct contrast to the Jurchen rulers of Jin, who were hunter-gatherers or farmers.

The real founder of the Jin dynasty, although he died before its actual proclamation, was Aguda (1068–1123). Although a ruler primarily of the “raw” Jurchen, he set about building his new state through combining all the elements present in Manchuria and Maritime Siberia, above all including Khitan horsemen but also Chinese captives of the Liao. The Khitan turncoats, however, became the most important element in the new state.

By the time of Aguda's death, four of the five subordinate Khitan capitals had already been taken, although one of them, the later Zhongdu, located just south of modern-day Beijing, was at first surrendered to the Song. The next Jurchen ruler, Taizong (r. 1123–1135), completed the conquest of Khitan Liao, forcing remnants to flee into western Turkistan, where the Western Liao Empire, known more commonly as Kara Khitai, was founded. Almost immediately a vast invasion of the former ally Song China was launched. It was nearly conquered by the Jurchen and barely survived as a new dynasty, the Southern Song dynasty (1125–1279). The entire north was turned over to the Jurchen except for the bend of the Yellow River ruled by the Tangut.

Jin reached its high point shortly thereafter, and areas ruled by it had a population in excess of 50 million. Wars continued against a resurgent Song Empire and were never resolved. Song was unable to reconquer the north and destroy Jin, and Jin was unable to destroy Song. In the Jin Empire a split soon emerged between, on the one hand, an elite focused on the south and Chinese culture and, on the other, the vast majority of less assimilated Jurchen and others. This dispute was still simmering at the time of the appearance of the Mongols and considerably weakened Jin in the face of a major invasion from the steppe.

The ruler during the first period of Mongol advance was Zhangzong (r. 1189–1208), a Sinicizer. He began a war with the Song Empire that was a failure and only showed the weakness of the Jurchen tribal base, in particular its cavalry. To prosecute this war, Zhangzong created considerable hostility when he also forcibly mobilized the *juyin* peoples, largely Khitan military groups, of the inner frontier with the intention of using them against the Song. In 1207 a large rebellion broke out among them, which essentially handed over to the Mongols what is now Inner Mongolia, then a mixed area of agricultural settlements and nomads. This included the Turkic Onggud to the east of the Yellow River bend and north of it, although some Onggud resisted the change.

By 1211, when the Mongols went over to a major assault against Jin on several fronts after already subduing the Tangut kingdom of Xi Xia, Inner Mongolia was their main



Although the Jin Empire was among the first foes of Chinggis Khan, it took over 20 years for the Mongols to defeat them. This depiction of a battle between the Mongol and Jin Jurchen armies in north China in 1211 comes from the *Jami al-Tawarikh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*) by Rashid al-Din, 14th century. The Mongol in the forefront with the long saber is thought to be Chinggis Khan. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

base, and the *juyin* peoples were most important allies. The Onggud also became a key Mongol ally in China.

Between 1211 and 1214, the Mongols raided on a large scale in Manchuria and northern China and in the latter year penetrated to the Jin central capital of Zhongdu. They failed to take it due to an epizootic among their animals, but the next year when the Jin emperor tried to retreat from his exposed position, *juyin* forces in his entourage took advantage of a power vacuum in Zhongdu to return and seize the city, now offered to the Mongols. By that time too many Chinese warlords had allied themselves with the Mongols, creating a vested interest in a Mongol presence in the area and a continued conquest.

Jin seemed to be on the verge of collapse but in fact lasted another 19 years by giving up the tribal Jurchen homeland and carefully marshaling a Chinese power base in the south, along the Yellow River. Also contributing to its survival were Mongol preoccupations in the west, in Chinggis Khan's series of campaigns to destroy Khwarazm. The Jin even achieved a recovery of sorts, reconquering many areas. Xi Xia's resistance to the Mongols also assisted its survival, as did Mongol uncertainty after the death of Chinggis Khan in 1227.

The uncertainty came to an end in 1231 when, by command of the new khan, Ogo-dei, a general advance began against the surviving Jin domains. This culminated in early 1234 with the destruction of the last Jin capital of Caizhou, after Jin Nanjing, the Jin southern capital in modern-day Kaifeng, had been taken during the previous year. The Jin emperor died in his refuge.

Although our sources mention a number of Jurchen active in Mongol China after 1233–1234, the Jurchen were never a major ethnic element outside of the tribal homeland, but they did survive to become the ancestors of the Manchus in the 16th century. Their written language, used mostly for inscriptions and using reshaped Chinese characters to write Jurchen words, did not. A new written language for the area did emerge but used the Uyghur script of the Mongols and a large number of Mongol loanwords.

THE RAW AND THE COOKED

The Chinese often viewed their northern neighbors in Mongolia and Manchuria as semi-civilized or barbaric. This applied particularly for the Jurchen. Unlike the Khitan who had enjoyed centuries of contact with China and the various dynasties of China, later including the universal Song, the Jurchen came to power relatively primitive, and most remained that way although they did secure a written language. In the 11th and 12th centuries there were two distinct groups of Jurchen, called “cooked” and “raw” by the Chinese. The latter, the vast majority of Jurchen, were the most primitive and lived in the depths of the Manchurian and Siberian homeland. The former were more Sinified, although their Chinese culture was not pure and was mostly learned from the Khitan. Many were agricultural; using cattle to draw plows over quite extensive fields. The “cooked” Jurchen had also borrowed something else, horses and riding from the Khitan, although most cavalrymen in the Jin Empire were Khitan and not Jurchen per se.

Assimilated to Chinese and later to Mongols, there are few groups today extending directly back to the Jurchen groups of the Jin Empire.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; *Juyin;* Onggud; *Key Events:* Jin Empire, Fall of the; *Military:* Caizhou, Siege of; Kaifeng, Siege of; *Key Places:* Kara Khitai; Song Empire; Zhongdu

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Kara Khitai (1125–1218)

Kara Khitai was a Central Asian empire created in the early 12th century by Khitan, who employed many Chinese institutions to rule a state comprising Muslims and pagans. While somewhat mysterious to its contemporaries, Kara Khitai played a pivotal role in the history of Asia and the rise of the Mongol Empire.

Yelu Dashi, a refugee of the Khitan Liao dynasty (905–1125), established the Kara Khitai Empire after the Jurchen tribes defeated the Liao Empire in 1125. Although the Liao ruled northern China (and much of Mongolia), the Liao dynasty was not native to China; they were a Mongolian group known as the Khitan. After being driven from the Liao Empire, Yelu Dashi, a prince of the Liao royal family, continued resistance against the Jurchen from Kedun, located along the Orkhon River in Mongolia.

Although Yelu Dashi's efforts against the Jin were at times effective, the Jin dynasty continued to grow in strength. Without allies, Yelu Dashi had little choice but to move farther west to elude the Jin. Thus, in 1130 he established a base in the region between the Irtysh and Emil Rivers.

Yelu Dashi's following increased due to the recruitment of various Turkic tribes, and he was elected *gur-khan* (universal khan). Despite his title, Yelu Dashi controlled very little territory, although he began to expand it slowly but steadily over the areas of Qayaliq and Almaliq (now in Kazakhstan). His greatest opportunity arrived when the

Qarakhanid (Turkic dynasty) ruler of the Central Asian city of Balasaghun (now in Kyrgyzstan) requested Yelu Dashi's assistance against Qarluq and Qangli Turk tribes that threatened his realm.

Yelu Dashi accepted the offer but first took over Balasaghun and usurped the throne. He then defeated the nomads who had intimidated the Qarakhanids. By 1134, the Kara Khitai Empire had grown substantially. With Yelu Dashi's victories, more nomadic tribes joined his ranks seeking booty from the plunder of Central Asian cities. By 1137, the Kara Khitai realm contained the cities of Khotan, Kashgar, and Besh-Baliq, all located in the Xinjiang region of China. The *gur-khan* also marched into the Fergana Valley (now divided between Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan). Here he defeated the Western Qarakhanids in May 1137 in the Battle of Khujand along the Amu Darya River. Although the *gur-khan* won a resounding victory, he did not follow his victory with the complete subjugation of Mawarannahr. Instead, he consolidated his recent conquests and did not return to the region until 1141.

While the *gur-khan's* tribal followers welcomed the lure of more territory and plunder, most sources indicate that Atsiz, ruler of Khwarazm (now in modern-day Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), invited the *gur-khan* into the territory. Increased tensions between Atsiz and his overlord, Sultan Sanjar, the ruler of the Seljuk Empire, made Atsiz seek allies. At the same time, Sanjar also worried about his northern borders. Although Atsiz had proven to be a recalcitrant subject, the Kara Khitan were infidels in the eyes of the Muslim Seljuk ruler. Indeed, while the overall religiosity of the Khitan can be called into question, they favored Buddhism. Regardless, the circumstances offered Sanjar an excellent opportunity to raise his status by defeating the infidels. In 1141 in the Battle of Qatwan, near Samarkand (now in Uzbekistan), the armies of the older empire of the Seljuks (1040–1194) to the south and the nascent empire of Kara Khitai to the north met. Although sources tend to exaggerate the number of troops he led into battle, the *gur-khan* decisively defeated Sanjar.

With his victory, Yelu Dashi secured Mawarannahr for the Kara Khitai Empire, and Atsiz became the vassal of the *gur-khan*. Finally, the empire of Kara Khitai firmly established itself as a considerable power in Central Asia. Although Yelu Dashi died two years later in 1143, he established a strong and flexible empire that ruled over nomadic tribes as well as sedentary mercantile and agricultural regions, including the great cities of Samarkand, Bukhara, Khotan, and Kashgar. Additionally, his empire was not only multiethnic but was also a mixture of religions including Islam, Buddhism, and Nestorian Christianity.

The creation of the Kara Khitai Empire had a tremendous influence in Central Asia. Because the empire was the nexus point for the Islamic world, East Asia, and the steppe regions, a great number of influences came to the fore under Kara Khitai. Among the most important was religious tolerance. Although the *gur-khans*, or rulers, of Kara Khitai tended to be Buddhist, they did not attempt to convert their subjects, who were predominantly Muslim. Many Muslims preferred the rule of Kara Kitai over that of previous Muslim rulers because the *gur-khans* tended to be more just or at least less oppressive. Furthermore, the Kara Khitai Empire was able to maintain control over the unruly Turkic tribes, the Qarluqs and Qanglis, so agricultural and mercantile interests

WHY WAS KARA KHITAI “BLACK” KHITAI?

The meaning of Kara Khitai remains a mystery. Khitai originates from Khitan, the ethnicity of the people who formed the empire. The Khitan themselves were of Mongolian origin in eastern Mongolia and Manchuria. After much of northern China was conquered and the Liao dynasty was established, the northern part of China was often known as Khitai or, as Marco Polo called it, Cathay. Although the Khitan were driven from power in 1125, the name remained significant. Indeed, in Russian as well as the Mongolian languages, Khitai remains the term for China.

The mystery of the name surrounds the appellation of Kara, which means “black” in Turkic and Mongolian. Often in the Turkic languages as well as in Chinese traditions, colors also have directional designations. Black typically designated “east”; however, Kara Khitai was certainly not eastern China. Inner Asian nomads also viewed themselves as being black or white. “White” referred to royal clans and families. Commoners were considered black or Kara. Kara also referred to nonroyal nobles. As Yelu Dashi was not of the royal clan of the Liao dynasty, it is probable that this is why his kingdom was known as Kara Khitai.

prospered. The rulers also understood the needs of the nomads and attempted to balance their interests, creating a table and a secure empire among a volatile mixture of groups.

Not until forces beyond its peripheries came into play did Kara Khitai begin to rupture. The primary cause of decline was the rise of the Mongol Empire, as some tribes, such as the Naiman, fled before the Mongols and entered Kara Khitai. Their arrival sowed the seeds of discord, ultimately undermining the empire and causing its fall. In 1210 Muhammad II, the Khwarazmshah, and Guchulug, the leader of the Naiman tribe of Mongolia and an opponent of Chinggis Khan, divided the Kara Khitai Empire between them.

Guchulug’s presence attracted the attention of Chinggis Khan, who sent an army to deal with this fugitive. In 1218, Jebe arrived and destroyed Guchulug’s nascent empire. Much of the population of Kara Khitai, disgruntled by Guchulug’s policies and taxes, welcomed the Mongols. Indeed, other than the Naiman tribesmen, the Mongols met no other resistance in the region and incorporated Kara Khitai into their territory. By 1218, the Mongol Empire bordered the Khwarazmian Empire across the Syr Darya River. The Mongolian Empire benefited greatly from the expertise of the Kara Khitan administrators, and Kara Khitan troops also augmented the Mongol army.

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See also: *Groups and Organizations:* Naiman; *Key Places:* Khwarazmian Empire; Jin Empire

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Khwarazmian Empire (1097–1224)

Khwarazmian was an Islamic empire in Central Asia that was destroyed by Chinggis Khan in 1224. The region of Khwarazm (Khorazm, Khorezm) is located south of the Aral Sea in modern-day Turkestan and Iran. Urgench (also called Gurganj), located on the western bank of the Amu Darya River, was its capital. Beginning in the 10th century, Urgench became a thriving commercial center due to the caravan trade coming from the Volga River region. Despite being surrounded by steppes and desert and thus somewhat isolated, the region itself was well irrigated, making it agriculturally viable. Initially an Iranian region, Khwarazm gained a substantial Turkic population with the migration of Oghuz Turks in the 11th century. It became part of the Seljuk Empire (1037–1197) in 1041. Governors were regularly appointed, but a dynasty was established by the Seljuk Mamluk Anushtigin Gharchai in 1077. He received the title of Khwarazmshah, meaning “king [shah] of Khwarazm.” Although Anushtigin never actually went to Khwarazm, his heirs retained the governorship and ruled as Khwarazmshah. It eventually became independent and established an empire that dominated modern-day Uzbekistan, Turkestan, and Afghanistan and much of Iran.

Due to Khwarazm’s proximity to the Eurasian steppes, the Khwarazmshahs often formed marriage alliances with the Kipchak tribes that nomadized in the steppes near Khwarazm. The alliances not only helped the Khwarazmshahs secure their northern borders but also gave them an alternate source of military resources.

The Khwarazmshahs tended to have an independent streak, a common trait of governors in more remote provinces. Nonetheless, attempts to achieve independence did not occur until 1138 during the civil wars that wracked the Seljuk Empire during the 12th century. Qizil Arslan Atsiz Khwarazmshah (r. 1127–1156) rebelled. The Seljuk Sultan Sanjar (r. 1118–1153) defeated him and ousted Atsiz from his governorship. Atsiz, however, regained his position in Khwarazm through a coup and submitted to Sultan Sanjar again in return for clemency. Nonetheless, Atsiz still yearned for more autonomy even as he placated Sanjar.

Atsiz’s moment came in 1141 after Sultan Sanjar was defeated in the Battle of Qatwan by the rising empire of Kara Khitai. Although Atsiz and his successors acknowledged the *gur-khan* of Kara Khitai as their sovereign, their rule was less intrusive and permitted the Khwarazmshah greater autonomy. This independence of action then permitted the Khwarazmshahs to expand, creating an empire independent of Kara Khitai even while part of it.

As Seljuk authority went into a downward spiral throughout much of their empire, much of the eastern empire was up for grabs. The Khwarazmshahs proved to be up to the opportunity. Khwarazm successfully acquired dominion over Khurasan. During the reign of Muhammad II Khwarazmshah (r. 1200–1220), prolonged warfare with the Ghurid dynasty (1011–1215) in Afghanistan led to the demise of the Ghurid Empire, and Khwarazm authority spread into modern-day Afghanistan and much of Pakistan. Muhammad II then took the opportunity to expand across Iran. By now the Seljuk Empire had fractured into a number of ineffectual kingdoms vying for legitimacy. Muhammad II brushed all of these away. Only an unexpected winter storm stymied his efforts to menace the Abbasid Caliphate.

Muhammad II also acquired Mawarannahr. When Naiman prince Guchulug usurped the throne in Kara Khitai, Muhammad II joined him in the conspiracy, gaining Mawarannahr in the process. His rule over it was contested by Guchulug, but the issue became moot in 1218, when the Mongols invaded Kara Khitai to destroy Guchulug. The Mongols made no claim to Mawarannahr and sought peace and a commercial treaty with Muhammad II Khwarazmshah. In 1218, the Khwarazmian Empire was at its peak. It stretched from the Syr Darya to the Tigris River and was the greatest power in the Islamic world. Yet, its claim to that title was ephemeral.

In 1219 the Otrar Massacre took place, triggering the Mongol invasion of the Khwarazmian Empire. Muhammad's recent acquisition of Mawarannahr was the first to feel the Mongols' wrath as Chinggis Khan sacked Bukhara and Samarkand. Meanwhile, Jochi led armies along the Syr Darya to place Urgench under siege. After the fall of Bukhara, Muhammad II Khwarazmshah abandoned Mawarannahr to its fate. Mongol troops commanded by Tolui then devastated Khurasan. The Mongols dispatched a task force commanded by Jebe and Subedei to pursue Muhammad. He successfully eluded them while facing mutiny and escaped to an island in the Caspian Sea, where he died from dysentery.

Before Muhammad died, he passed the mantle of kingship to his son, Jalal al-Din. Jalal al-Din successfully rallied the Khwarazmian armies in Afghanistan and defeated one Mongol army. Success was transient, as much of Jalal al-Din's support dissipated over squabbles and upon Chinggis Khan's approach. The Mongol leader defeated Jalal al-Din at the Indus River, and he later escaped and fled to India.

Although another task force pursued Jalal al-Din, they failed to catch him. Chinggis Khan and his sons then continued their conquest of the Khwarazmian Empire. Jalal al-Din remained in Afghanistan until 1223, when he received news of a rebellion in Xi Xia. The Mongol armies withdrew behind the Amu Darya River. Despite conquering the entire Khwarazmian Empire, the Mongols only occupied Mawarannahr and Khwarazm proper. While the destruction in Khurasan was exaggerated in the sources, when Jalal al-Din returned from his exile in 1224, there wasn't an empire to rule. After a few failed efforts, he moved to western Iran and successfully established a short-lived realm, which then attracted Mongol attention. With his death in 1230, the Khwarazmian Empire vanished from history.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Khurasan; Mawarannahr; *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah; Jochi; Tolui Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kipchaks; Mamluks; Naiman; *Key Events:* Otrar Massacre; *Military:* Subedei; *Key Places:* Abbasid Caliphate; Kara Khitai; Kipchak Steppes; Xi Xia

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Kipchak Steppes

The Kipchak steppes, also known as the Bilad al-Kipchak, Dasht-i Kipchak, Polovetskoe Pole, and Cumania, consisted of the steppe land stretching from the Carpathian Mountains to the Irtysh River. The exact extent of territory is disputed by geographers. For some the Kipchak steppes are the arid grasslands stretching from the Carpathian Mountains to roughly the Irtysh River, while for others it was smaller and consisted only of the steppes located between the Carpathian Mountains and the Ural River. Much of the disagreement is centered on the primary inhabitants of the region in the 12th and 13th centuries—the Kipchaks. Some scholars only consider the Kipchaks as dwelling west of the Ural River. Those Turkic tribes in the east were generally called Qanglis. The difference is minor, however, as the Qanglis were believed to be a confederation of eastern Kipchak tribes who otherwise were identical to those in the west.

The Kipchak steppes have been inhabited by pastoral nomads for millennia. Even though the soil of the region consists of rich chernozem (black in color) earth, in the premodern era it was difficult to farm, as the turf, consisting of tall feather, fescue, and other grasses, was too thick for simple plows to cut. It did, however, provide excellent conditions for pastoral nomadism, allowing a variety of animals to prosper. While temperatures averaged zero degrees Fahrenheit in January and 75 degrees Fahrenheit during July, it was tolerable enough for long-term habitation.

Several nomadic cultures and empires dominated the Kipchak steppes since the ancient period. The most notable were the Scythians (ca. 1200 BCE–300 CE), who are well described by Herodotus. For most of the ancient period and even into the medieval era, the region was called Scythia. The Huns (ca. 395–500 CE) also based the majority of their empire in the Kipchak steppes. Hungary only served as the advance base for their operations, as did the Avars (558–796). The Gok Turk Empire (568–630) and the



The Kipchak steppes stretched from the Carpathian Mountains (seen here) to the Caspian Sea. For the Mongols it was a strategic region not only because they could control the numerous Kipchak Turks, but also for the ample pasture it provided for their flocks and herds. (Yuriy Brykaylo/Dreamstime.com)

Second Turkic Empire (682–731) extended their empires deep into the Kipchak steppes, reaching the Black Sea. As a result, many others fled before them (such as the Avars), but Turkic tribes also settled throughout the Kipchak steppes.

Among these included the aforementioned Kipchak nomads. The first migrations of the Kipchaks appear in the early 11th century, displacing Oghuz Turks (the later moving into Central Asia and the Middle East, including the Seljuks) and Pechenegs. By the end of 1100 the Kipchaks dominated the Kipchak steppes, and hence why all referred to it in one manner or another (Dasht-i Kipchak, Cumania, Polovetskoe Pole, etc.). As the Kipchaks were not united, the region and its borders tended to be in a state of turmoil for much of the 12th century.

During this period, the Kipchak steppes were divided into approximately five supratribal or confederation zones: (1) steppes of modern-day Kazakhstan, (2) the Volga-Ural region, (3) the Don River region, (4) the Dnieper River region, and (5) the Danube River region. While the regions may have indicated some semblance of unity within a territory, it was not guaranteed. They did, however, ensure that the sedentary encroachment on the steppes was unlikely, although it also affected trade routes, making the passage through the steppes a risky but not impossible proposition.

The Kipchak steppes altered with the appearance of the Mongols. The chaotic nature of the Kipchak tribes dissipated as the Mongols made the steppes an integral part of

their empire. The majority of the Kipchak steppes had been bequeathed to the heirs of Jochi and formed the core of the Golden Horde. Nonetheless, consisting of a large population of Kipchak Turks, the Jochid Ulus was often referred to as the Kipchak Khanate.

While the Mongols' relations with the Rus' principalities may garner the majority attention in the scholarship, the Kipchak steppes were truly the heart of the Golden Horde. The nomadic population was of greater importance. Several cities emerged (and others existed prior to the Mongols) in the steppes. Cities such as Sarai and New Sarai served not only as administrative centers but also as commercial cities. With peace restored in the steppes, a northern caravan route flourished in the Kipchak steppes. Italian merchants, such as Venetians and Genoese, flocked to ports in the Black Sea and to Sarai to engage in long-distance trade. Indeed, this is what took Nicolo and Maffeo Polo from the Black Sea to the Yuan Empire.

Even with the political disturbances and the wars between the Golden Horde and the Il-Khanate, the commercial activities in the Kipchak steppes continued unfettered. It was not until the rise of Timur-i Leng that the Kipchak steppes began to diminish in importance. Timur's defeat of Toqtamysh and the destruction of both Sarai and New Sarai undermined the caravan trade. While commercial activities still continued, Timur-i Leng intentionally targeted the routes to destroy the commercial viability of the Golden Horde and rerouted the caravans through the Middle East through his own empire.

Between this and Timur's own efforts to keep the Golden Horde politically and militarily weak, the Kipchak steppes once again became destabilized. While the area never quite returned to the chaotic state that existed during the 12th century, the sheer number of successor powers to the Golden Horde ensured that the Kipchak steppes from the 15th century to the 17th century remained dangerous and contested.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Sarai; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; Kipchaks; *Primary Documents:* Document 3

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Koryo (935–1392)

The Koryo dynasty, from which our word “Korea” originated, emerged as a power in Korea in 935 following the fall of the previous Silla dynasty (645–935), which fell prey to civil wars and rebellions after uniting Korea for the first time in its history. Koryo was founded by Wang Kon, the later King T’aejo. The period of its rule constituted the golden age of Korean Buddhism, although the period also witnessed conflict between powerful aristocrats with private armies and central authority. Korea was also threatened with foreign invasion during the Koryo period, at first from the Khitan of the Liao dynasty, then from the Jurchen of Jin and, then, in the early 13th century, from the Mongols.

The Mongols, which by that time had moved deep into Manchuria after initially raiding the Inner Mongolian borderlands and then more interior Jin areas, taking the capital of Zhongdu in 1215, first raided Koryo in 1218. They did not occupy Korea but forced the Koryo dynasty to pay tribute. A tribute list from this period even survives, paid to Temuge Otchigin, Chinggis Khan’s younger brother. It included exotics, such as Korean dyestuffs.

Faced with a Korean failure to cooperate, the Mongols came back again in 1231, and once again Koryo soon backed off from tribute paying, initiating an extended period of warfare that went on for several decades. During this period the Koryo king and his court retired to Kanghwa Island, located just offshore in central Korea. Finally, during the reign of Mongke (1251–1259), Koryo made peace. By this time much of Koryo’s military had been destroyed, with the Mongols effectively eliminating the Korean military class that would have been the equivalent of the Japanese samurai if it had survived. This was an event that led to the foundation of a new Korean civilian elite, the *yangban*, which subsequently dominated Korea. Buddhism, patronized by the old military elite, went into decline, and Korea became a Confucianist country, although native shamanic traditions remained strong as well. During the Mongol period of Koryo history, a government was established that involved a province of Korea primarily staffed by the king and his ministers, although there were Mongol representatives too.

Korea continued its association with the Mongols long after the Yuan period (1260–1368), the official end of that dynasty, and had two special relationships with its Mongol rulers in China. On the one side, Korea became a major base for Khubilai Khan’s two attempted invasions of Japan, in 1274 and 1281. On the other, the Korean ruling house entered into extensive marriage relationships with the Mongols to the extent that by the end of the Yuan dynasty, the Mongol ruling family in China was half Korean. Korean brides exercised great influence among them. Similarly, Mongol girls were important in Korea. In addition to the dynastic marriages, Korean girls were preferred brides for the Mongol elite, being considered especially beautiful, a tradition that has come down to us today in Mongolian folklore.

During the first Mongol invasion of Japan, primarily Mongol and Chinese troops stationed in Korea were used, with the Koreans providing most of the warships needed to move the invasion army to Japan. At first the 1274 invasion was a success.

The Mongols even set up an occupation government, but a storm forced the them to reembark their invasion army, and the invasion fleet was destroyed in a storm. Khubilai tried again in 1281, this time with a much larger army, including Yuan forces per se but also a surrendered Song fleet that had formerly constituted a large part of the Song Navy. As before, the Koreans provided much of the navy, although new ships for the invasion fleet were also built by the Mongols in northern China. Once again a great wind, the famous kamikaze of Japanese tradition, destroyed the invasion fleet. Japanese resistance was also determined, in spite of the Mongol use of exploding bombs hurled by catapults, something done there probably for the first time anywhere in history. Illustrations of the battle from the Japanese side show just such bombs in use, but this was not believed until some original bombs were found in the wreckage of Yuan ships just offshore.

Khubilai planned to continue his invasions but faced increasing opposition in Mongol China, in part because the Korean invasions were not the only failed Mongol attempts at overseas expansion. The Mongols were also defeated in Vietnam and Indonesia. In any case, the Japanese expeditions had one positive result: Marco Polo's account of Japan, the first such notice in Western history.

The remainder of Mongol rule in Korea was less exciting, with no large invasions, but during the 13th and 14th centuries there was substantial Mongol cultural as well as political influence. Korean national dress, for example, is patterned after the Mongol national costume, the *deel*. The period was also replete with food influences from the Mongols, including the national drink, *soju*, a brandy and once called by the Mongol name (from Arabic) *araki*. The whole idea of distillation, as well as the distilling equipment, we now know was a Mongol introduction to Korea, coming in at about the time of the Japanese invasions.

Another influence of the Mongol period is cartography. A map survives in a Japanese collection based on a Korean map from 1402, which in turn is based on a Mongol-era original. This is extremely significant, because the map not only shows Korea, with its proper shape, and China but also suggests by the regional organization of its cartographic subject matter a sailing route down the coast of China, around Southeast Asia, and then past India to the Persian Gulf, where a major trade route connected China (and Korea) with Iran and, via Iran, Tabriz and Trebezond with the Black Sea and Europe.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Key Events:* Japan, Invasion of

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Lithuania

At the time of the Mongol invasions of the Rus' principalities and Central Europe, the Baltic kingdom of Lithuania was not considered a substantial power by anyone. Largely an agrarian society, the Lithuanians shared a common identity but were not united in any sense of the word. They did have a strong military tradition of raiding both on land and at sea. Nonetheless, the Lithuanians had concerns about the expanding power of Novgorod as well as incursions by crusaders who invaded periodically, although the thick forests and marshes of the region made it difficult for invaders to penetrate.

The foundations for Lithuania's rise were laid even as the Mongols began their invasion of Rus'. In 1238, the Lithuanian prince Mindaugas (r. 1238–1263) became the supreme ruler in Lithuania. His rise to power was secured by marriage alliances, assassinations, and direct military force. He also confiscated most of the lands within Lithuania to secure a base of support. Lithuania began its expansion by encouraging those who lost lands to carve out new territories at the expense of Poland and Rus'.

Although a pagan, Mindaugas converted, at least superficially, to Catholicism to secure the support of western merchants as well as thwart attacks by the crusading armies. He may have even sought to attract their support against Rus'. While the conversion may have suited his external ambitions, it threatened the unity of his fragile state, as Lithuanian princess rebelled against him because of his religion and his reliance on Christian (and often foreign) advisers. After he quelled the rebellion, Mindaugas abandoned Christianity and expelled Christians from Lithuania. Whether because of his ties to a foreign religion or because of his forceful actions to secure the throne, Mindaugas was murdered in 1263, leading to seven years of civil war.

Traidenis (r. 1270–1282) emerged as the victor in 1270. He continued the model of Mindaugas, omitting the conversion to a foreign religion. Despite more than 10 years in power, he could not secure the throne for the long term for his family. Instability continued after his death. It was not until Vytenis became the grand duke (r. 1295–1315) that Lithuania began true dynastic power. His title "grand duke" shows a realization of power in the hierarchies of Rus' as well as in Poland. Vytenis fought the Teutonic Knights, aiding the Prussians against them beginning in 1295. At the same time he courted western merchants and made an alliance with Poland, a Christian state that became alarmed at Teutonic expansion. He even converted to Catholicism to make the alliance easier. Unlike in Mindaugas's reign, this was an easier transition, as now the Lithuanians ruled a sizable Catholic population.

Vytenis also expanded primarily into Rus' territory, with Polotsk and Kiev entering into Lithuania's orbit in the early 1300s if not earlier. The Lithuanians took advantage of the instability of the Golden Horde during the ascendancy of the kingmaker, Nogai. Not only did he receive tribute, but Vytenis's relatives ruled those cities on his behalf, and Russian troops fought in his armies against the Teutonic Knights. By 1315 the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was stable and secure even though Vytenis died in that year without heirs.

Gediminas (r. 1315–1341/1342), one of Vytenis's brothers, ascended the throne in November or December 1315. While Vytenis gained some Rus' territory, Gediminas made a more concerted effort. While some cities joined the Lithuanians by choice, preferring Lithuanian dominion over the Golden Horde, Gediminas was not shy about using force to expand either. Volynia-Galicia fell through Lithuanian conquest, as did swaths of Kievan territory in the 1320s. Gediminas accomplished this by taking advantage of peace with the Teutonic Knights and the Golden Horde's preoccupation in wars with the Il-Khanate. The Golden Horde did not remain passive and raided Lithuania in 1325. Often control of the Rus' cities in the western regions remained in doubt, with both Lithuania and the Golden Horde claiming suzerainty and Kiev paying tribute to both. Despite their rivalry, Gediminas also found common cause with the Golden Horde and joined raids into Poland and against the Teutonic Knights. By and large, the Mongols tolerated the Lithuanians as long as they did not disrupt the Mongol authority over Rus'.

In the late 14th century, Lithuania remained involved in steppe affairs. Its growing strength made it the preferred location for refugees escaping the wrath of the Golden Horde, whether Mongol (Tatar) or Russian. Under Grand Duke Algirdas (r. 1345–1377), Lithuania expanded to a scant 100 miles from Moscow, and Kiev fell to Lithuania in 1362. Even Mongol princes took refuge there. Toqtamysh, Tamerlane's rival, took refuge there in 1395 and sought to use it as a launching point to renew his claim to the Golden Horde's throne. This also marked the establishment of what became known as the Lithuanian Tatars. Marriage ties between the grand duchy and the various princely houses of Rus' and the general laxity of Mongol rule over Rus' also permitted Lithuania to intervene in Rus' affairs. Gradually, much of the western portions of the Rus' lands transitioned from the Golden Horde to Lithuania without much resistance on the part of the Golden Horde.

While Lithuania at times was a rival of the Golden Horde, it could not seriously threaten the Golden Horde itself. Lithuania lacked the resources to project power deep into the steppes even after it united with Poland in 1385. Nonetheless, the turmoil within the Golden Horde during the late 14th century and in the 15th century prevented it from effectively dealing with Lithuanian ambitions. Thus, by the 15th century an uneasy *modus vivendi* was established.

Timothy May

See also: *Government and Politics:* Nogai; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; *Individuals:* Timur-i Leng; *Key Events:* Europe, Invasion of

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Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)

The Mamluk Sultanate ruled over Egypt and Syria, using the Euphrates River and the Syrian Desert as a border between it and the Mongol Il-Khanate. Mamluk authority also stretched down the coast of the Red Sea on both sides of that body of water and occasionally extended into Yemen. Of greatest importance, the Mamluk Sultanate controlled the holy cities of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, providing it with enough prestige to be considered the most powerful and important Islamic state during the late medieval period.

The Mamluk Sultanate differed, as its ruling class originated from slaves. Most of these Mamluks were Kipchaks—a result of their availability as slaves from the Mongol conquest of the Kipchak steppes. Although large numbers of Kipchaks became Mamluks in the 1240s, there was no indication that they would establish a state. It took two foreign invasions for the Mamluks to discard protocol and establish their own state.

The last powerful Ayyubid ruler of the empire established by Saladin (1138–1193) was Al Salih Ayyubi (r. 1240–1249). He increased the purchasing of Mamluks due to their availability. Although he possessed several regiments, his personal regiment was known as the Bahriyya, so named as their barracks was the Bahr al-Nil, a fortified island in the Nile. They played a pivotal role in the defeat of a crusader army at La Forbie in 1244. This defeat along with the capture of Jerusalem triggered the Seventh Crusade, led by King Louis IX of France.

King Louis (r. 1226–1270) invaded Egypt in 1249 and successfully captured the city of Damietta. During the invasion, al-Salih died. His death was hidden so that his successor, Turanshah, could arrive from Syria. Meanwhile, the Bahriyya and other Mamluks continued to fight King Louis. At the city of Mansurah, they routed the crusaders and eventually surrounded the French forces, forcing King Louis IX to surrender. During this period, Turanshah arrived. As every prince had his own set of Mamluks, Turanshah planned to replace many of his father's Mamluks with his own. Al-Salih's Mamluks, who had just saved Egypt, saw this as an insult and committed regicide. As they had no claim to the throne, they put a 10-year-old nephew of Al-Salih on the throne, while Mamluk officers served as "advisers."

The following decade was a period of political chaos as Mamluk factions jockeyed for power. It took Hulegu's invasion of Syria to shake them from their lethargy. They disposed of the child king, and a Mamluk officer named Qutuz took the throne. He then defeated the Mongols at Ayn Jalut (in modern-day Israel) in 1260. Shortly afterward, one of Qutuz's commanders murdered him and seized power in 1260. Afterward he was killed by Baybars, one of his generals. Under Baybars, the Mamluks forged Egypt and Syria into an empire. As he rose through power through regicide, he emphasized his successes against the Mongols as well as the crusaders to demonstrate that he was the true defender of the faith (and hence why he was known as Al Zahir Baybars, or the Victorious Baybars).

The Mamluks took advantage of the dissolution of the Mongol Empire and formed an alliance with the Golden Horde against the Il-Khanate. As Islam grew in importance to the Golden Horde, the alliance gained greater importance. The alliance served them

well, as it permitted the Mamluk Sultanate to primarily fight a defensive war against the Il-Khanate while eliminating the remaining crusader strongholds, finally accomplishing the task in 1291. The conversion of the Il-Khanate to Islam under Ghazan placed the Mamluk Sultanate in a bind: should they fight another Muslim ruler? In the end, Ghazan made the choice for them and invaded Syria. It was not until the reign of Abu Said that peace was finally achieved.

Despite the peace, when the Il-Khanate collapsed in 1335 it was a relief, as a Muslim Il-Khanate still questioned the Mamluk Sultanate's legitimacy. Still, with the removal of what became their *raison d'être*, the Mamluk Sultanate slowly diminished in power. The Mamluk elite occupied themselves with political squabbles between different factions who settled their disputes in the streets of Cairo. Even the specter of the Black Plague did not diminish the fighting over succession matters. Most of the sultans attained power through regicide, making it virtually impossible to establish a dynasty. The son of a Mamluk could not be a Mamluk and thus did not share the same bonds as those he commanded. As the Mamluks were tightly bound to political households, the ascension of a new ruler meant that the political prominence of each powerful Mamluk household could change instantly. Almost inevitably, one faction of the Mamluks would usurp the throne, and the cycle began again. A smooth succession was a singular rarity in the Mamluk Sultanate.

Due to internal issues, the Mamluk Sultanate became a paper tiger that could not withstand major powers, such as Timur-i Leng or the Ottomans. They also remained resistant to military changes that threatened the status of the Mamluk elite. They only grudgingly adopted gunpowder weapons, as they were not initially suitable for cavalry. Their reluctance was also based on tactical considerations. A Mamluk could shoot more arrows with a greater range and accuracy than with the handguns of the period. The Turkics and Circassians who comprised the Mamluk cavalry rejected them, forcing the sultan to form artillery units of Sudanese Mamluks who were considered inferior. This dissension led to their demise, as the Ottoman sultan Selim the Grim (1465–1520) conquered Syria in 1516 and then crushed the Mamluks in 1517 in Egypt.

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See also: *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; *Individuals:* Abu Said; Baybars I; Ghazan; Timur-i Leng; *Groups and Organizations:* Mamluks; *Key Events:* Black Death; *Military:* Gunpowder

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Samarkand

Located in Mawarannahr (present-day Uzbekistan) in Central Asia, Samarkand was a major city along the Silk Road and the capital of the Mongol leader Timur's empire. Samarkand's site on the crossroads of trade routes between the Far East and Europe allowed its development as a prosperous commercial center, while the Oxus (also called the Amu Darya) and Zeravshan Rivers supplied the city's water needs and made the surrounding countryside an oasis suitable for agriculture and herding. Ruled by a series of empires and peoples who wished to control the city's commercial interests, Samarkand is one of the oldest cities in Central Asia and is considered one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Much of its magnificent surviving architecture dates from the Middle Ages.

Samarkand was founded in about 700 BCE; it is thought that the city quickly developed as a busy community of craftsmen and acquired an early irrigation system. During its rule by the Persian Achaemenid dynasty, the city was probably a center of Zoroastrianism. By the fourth century, it was called Maracanda and was the capital of the Kingdom of Sogdiana, fortified with a citadel and a rampart. Despite these defenses, Alexander the Great seized the city in 329. The Hellenistic influence of the Greek conquerors left an impression on Samarkand's art and culture for the next few centuries. Also about this time the city became an established point on the Silk Road, where goods were exchanged, middlemen conducted their business, and traveling merchants rested before the next stage of their journey east or west. Samarkand's economy also profited from the lucrative trade in lapis lazuli, one of the region's natural resources.

With the disintegration of Alexander's empire, Samarkand fell under the rule of the Kushan Empire, the Sassanid Empire, and the Central Asian Turks in the 6th century CE. Another series of rulers followed between the 8th and early 13th centuries: Arabs, the Persian Samanid dynasty, Turks, and the Iranian Khwarazmshah dynasty. The city was likely the home of diverse religious communities before the 8th-century Muslim Arab conquest and even for sometime afterward, with Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Christianity practiced. Buddhism gained a following as well, and in the 7th century the Chinese Buddhist monk Xuanzang preached in Samarkand.

In 1220, the Mongolian conqueror Chinggis Khan captured and devastated the city. In the next century, the Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta visited Samarkand and described its ruined state and lack of city walls. In the late 14th century, however, it was magnificently rebuilt by Timur, who had been born near Samarkand and now made it the capital and cultural center of his empire. Artists, scholars, and scientists were drawn to Samarkand from the diverse regions of Timur's empire.

Timur and his successors enriched Samarkand with lavish construction. A moat, broad ramparts, and an 11th-century wall five miles long enclosed the city. Six gates in the wall opened onto streets that led to Samarkand's center, where the city's main public square, Rigestan Square (also called the Registan), as well as numerous palaces, fountains, and parks were located. Artisans sold their goods in distinct bazaars reserved



Samarkand had been a hub for Silk Road trade for centuries. Muhammad Khwarazmshah had only recently made it his capital when the Mongols invaded the Khwarazmian Empire in 1219. (PS Spence/iStockphoto.com)

for different trade items. Samarkand was famed for the enormous mosque of Bibi-Khanom. The mosque was commissioned by Timur's Chinese wife and was rapidly built between 1399 and 1404 after the emperor's return from his successful campaign in India. According to one of Timur's descendants, the Mughal emperor Babur, the mosque of Bibi Khanum was so grand that it was possible to read one of its gold inscriptions from a distance of one mile. The high and spacious dome was much admired in contemporary accounts; shortly after the mosque's completion, however, much of its structure, including its minarets and dome, collapsed, and Timur executed the two architects.

Also built during Timur's reign was the Gur-e Amir mausoleum, the tomb of the emperor and several descendants. The mausoleum was built on an octagonal plan, topped with a fluted blue-tiled dome 112 feet high and decorated with geometric designs, gold leaf, and the name of Islam's prophet, Muhammad, in Kufic script (calligraphic writing). Another burial complex, the Shah-i-Zinde, was located to the city's northeast on a site selected for its proximity to an important Muslim shrine. Built for members of the royal family and other aristocrats, the complex contained about two dozen blue-domed mausoleums connected by staircases and walkways. Their decoration is ornate, with surfaces covered in glazed brick, tile, and geometric and floral relief carvings in turquoise and lapis lazuli.

Samarkand continued to flourish for some time after Timur's death in 1405. His grandson Ulugh Beg followed his example of supporting Samarkand's scientists and artists. Between 1417 and 1420, Ulugh Beg built an important madrasa complex facing Rigistan Square; this madrasa enhanced Samarkand's status as a center of Islamic scholarship, and two other madrasas were later added to Rigistan Square during the 17th century. A major early astronomer in his own right, Ulugh Beg constructed a three-story observatory where he and his scientific colleagues (including the great astronomer and mathematician al-Kashi) made sophisticated calculations without the use of a telescope, including information about the motions of planets and the sun's annual course; the observatory also produced a catalog of more than 1,000 stars with their locations. Excavation of the observatory has uncovered an instrument critical to this work, a device similar to a very large quadrant that the Samarkand astronomers used to measure the positions of celestial objects. With Ulugh Beg's assassination in 1449, Samarkand's heyday came to an end. The Uzbeks captured the city in 1500 and incorporated it into their Bukhara khanate.

Jennifer Hutchinson

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Timur-i Leng

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Song Empire (960–1279)

The Song (Sung) Empire reunited China proper and ended the chaos and division created by the fall of the Tang dynasty in 907. However, learning from the experience of their Tang predecessors, the Song founders established a fundamental national policy “emphasizing the civil and deemphasizing the military” (*Zhongwen qingwu*). Through this policy, the Song stripped the powers of the local military leaders to avoid any potential rise of local warlords, which had destabilized the Tang Empire. Meanwhile, the Song promoted neo-Confucian civil ideals and an examination system that depreciated martial virtues. While assisting internal stability, this policy made the Song dynasty militarily weaker than its northern nomadic neighbors.

The Song Empire was challenged by the Khitan Liao dynasty (907–1125) from the northeast and then the Tangut Xia dynasty (1038–1237) from the northwest. With a weak military, the Song dynasty was forced to pay tribute to both powers and acknowledged their equal status to itself, which was rare in Chinese history. The Northern Song

planned to forge an alliance with the newly risen Jurchen in Manchuria to cope with the Khitan but instead became the next victim of the Jin cavalry after the fall of the Liao dynasty. Kaifeng, the Song capital, fell to the Jurchen, who also captured the Song emperor. Later a new Song emperor was installed in Lin'an (today's Hangzhou), south of the Yangtze River, thus beginning the Southern Song period (1127–1279). Although the Song emperors aspired to recover their lost territory in northern China, the inefficiency of the Song military was only able to prevent the Jin army from crossing the Yangtze River.

When Chinggis Khan ravaged northern China in 1211, the Song failed to take advantage of the situation and attack the Jin because they had not recovered from their earlier defeat during the Kaixi War (1205–1208) against the Jin. Later the Song, seeking to benefit from the chaos created by the Mongol-Jin war, marched into Shandong Province, which was occupied by the Mongols in 1225. The Mongols destroyed the Song army. According to the plan that Chinggis Khan laid out before his death, Ogodei attacked the Jin in 1227 by marching through Song territory without the latter's permission. The Song then cooperated with the Mongols against the Jin in the campaign of 1233.

This Mongol-Song alliance barely lasted a year. After the Song killed a Mongol envoy, Ogodei Khan sent an army to seek revenge in 1234. This action led to a series of attacks on the Song lasting 10 years. However, the attacks were not fruitful and decisive because the Mongols lacked a powerful navy. Furthermore, the harsh, humid climate and watery plain of southern China did not favor the Mongol cavalry. During the interim between Ogodei Khan's death and Mongke Khan's enthronement, Mongol politics focused on the internal power struggles, allowing the Song Empire to prepare for the next invasion.

Mongke Khan resumed the war against the Song in 1256, leading an army into Sichuan. Although Song politics was controlled by the notorious minister Jia Sidao and Song military strength was declining, the Mongol invasion faltered because of able Song generals, such as Lu Wende; well-established Song fortresses; and harsh weather. Mongke Khan's sudden death in 1259 forced the Mongol armies to retreat from the battlefield. The civil war between Khubilai and Ariq Boke and Li Tan's rebellion in Shandong gave the Song a respite of 10 years. In 1268, Khubilai Khan resumed the war against the Song with the support of a powerful navy. By this time, the Song had lost their best generals and were unable to defend the frontier of Xiangyang in 1273. Khubilai Khan appointed Bayan Chingsang as the general to deliver the Song a final blow. The Song Navy was defeated by the Mongols first at Yangluobao and then at Dingjia Isle, which was under Jia Sidao's direct command. In 1276 the Song surrendered, and Bayan Chingsang's army peacefully entered the Song capital, Lin'an. However, it took three years for the Mongols to mop up all the resistance of Song loyalists.

Although the Song Empire was weak when compared to its predecessor, the Tang Empire, it made significant accomplishments in trade, technology, and academics. Although the Tangut hampered Song trade along the Silk Road, maritime trade flourished. By the end of the 12th century, the city of Quanzhou dominated China's maritime trade and became one of the largest ports in the world. Many foreign settlements

were also established in Quanzhou, which continued to flourish during the Mongol Yuan years. Marco Polo's travel account vividly documented its prosperity and glory. The application of paper money also contributed to trade in the Song Empire, and the Mongols adopted and extended this practice later. For technology, the Chinese used coal extensively in ferrous metallurgy by the early 11th century, and by 1087 coal had started to replace firewood and charcoal as a domestic fuel in the Song Empire. By 1078, the estimation of the annual total production of pig iron from southern Hebei and northern Henan was around 35,000 tons, surpassing the yearly production of Great Britain in the early 18th century. Gunpowder and firearms were developed and could be practically applied in warfare. For academics, neo-Confucianism, which considered the self as having the potential of being a moral actor in society and politics through learning, was developed in the late 11th century. The Mongol Yuan court later adopted it as the orthodoxy in the Chinese civil service examination system when the system was restored in 1315.

Wei-chieh Tsai

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Yuan Empire; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; *Military:* Gunpowder; *Key Places:* Jin Empire

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Sultanate of Rum

Rum was a sultanate in Anatolia (Asia Minor), with its capital first at Nicaea (modern-day Iznik, Turkey) and then at Ikonion (modern-day Konya), ruled by a branch of the Seljuk family from 1080/1081 to 1307/1308. The name Rum, deriving from the Bilad al-Rum of Muslim authors, relates to the formerly Rhomaic (i.e., Byzantine) territories of Anatolia.

The sultanate's foundation and consolidation period is intertwined with the careers of the able Sulayman I ibn Qutlumush, who perished fighting against a large Great Seljuk coalition in 1085 or 1086, and with Qilij Arslan I, who lost his capital of Nicaea to the Byzantines in 1097 during the First Crusade (1096–1099). The latter faced the Crusade of 1101 in coalition with the Danishmendids, winning two important victories at Mersivan and Herakleia, but met his death in Syria against the Seljuk ruler Riwan of

Aleppo in 1107. By the early 12th century, the Seljuks of Rum had moved their capital to the Cappadocian town of Ikonion, from which comes the alternative appellation of their state as the Sultanate of Konya.

For most of the 12th century, the sultans of Rum had to wage wars against their Anatolian rivals, the Turkophone Danishmendids of Caesarea in Cappadocia and Sebasteia, as well as against the Byzantines. They also faced attacks by the armies of the Second Crusade (1147–1149) and the Third Crusade (1189–1192). Under the emperors Alexius I Comnenus and John II Comnenus (ca. 1112–1140), the Byzantines succeeded in wresting from the Seljuks a significant section of their former western and northwestern Anatolian possessions. However, it was in the following period that Seljuk-Byzantine relations went through fluctuating phases, especially in the

reigns of Qilij Arslan II of Rum and Manuel I Comnenus of Byzantium. In 1161–1162 the sultan was magnificently received in Constantinople, but the treaty concluded was soon proven to be a dead letter, for in 1173/1174 Qilij Arslan II made a pact with Byzantium's bitter enemy, the Holy Roman emperor Frederick I Barbarossa. Shortly afterward the sultan thwarted Manuel I's invasion of Rum (1174–1175) by defeating him in the Battle of Myriocephalum in September 1176.

Qilij Arslan II crowned his successes by annexing the two Danishmendid emirates in 1174–1177/1178, though his final years were spent in agonizing strife, as his sons bickered over the succession. In the course of the Third Crusade, Qilij Arslan II lost his capital to the armies of Frederick I and soon afterward died a broken man, naming as his successor one of his younger sons, Kay-Khusraw I. It was during this period that Byzantium failed to exploit its contacts with the Zangids; a firm alliance with Nur al-Din might have prevented its defeat at Myriocephalum, while a more effective



Mausoleum of Qilij Arslan II, Alaeddin Camii Mosque, Konya, Turkey. The Seljuks resisted Mongol rule but submitted after being defeated by Baiju in 1243 at the Battle of Kose Dag. Prior to the Mongol conquest, the sultan's court flourished with refugee intelligentsia and literati. Kilij Arslan II (r. 1156–1192) helped the Seljuks of Rum reach the height of their power. (B. O'Kane/Alamy Stock Photo)

collaboration with Saladin (with whom the last Comnenus, Andronicus I Comnenus, and the first Angelus, Isaac II Angelus, signed treaties between 1184/1185 and 1192) might have led to a gradual reconquest of Asia Minor, most of which had been lost to the Rum Seljuks by the late 12th century.

The sultanate's history from the late 12th century to the late 13th century is treated in detail by the *Saljuq-nama* of Ibn Bibi, a Persian court chronicler at Ikonion, whose work is complemented by Ibn al-Athir and the major Byzantine chroniclers of the period. From this period dates another important aspect of Byzantine-Seljuk relations: the frequently attested social, institutional, cultural, and artistic contact and interplay between Rum Seljuks and Anatolian Christians, mostly evidenced by the phenomenon of mixed marriages, prove that both were not only opponents in battlefields but also partakers of a common cultural heritage.

In his first reign Kay-Khusraw I attempted to expand his territories at the expense of Byzantium, but he was temporarily toppled by his brother Rukn al-Din Sulayman Shah II, who continued his brother's policy and also attacked Cilician Armenia and Georgia but died suddenly while preparing a major expedition in the Caucasus. Meanwhile, the exiled Kay-Khusraw I, who had found refuge in Byzantium in 1197–1203/1204, was reinstated at Ikonion. Since his Byzantine benefactors, the Angelids, had been toppled in 1204, he became hostile toward their successors at Nicaea, the Lascarids, as well as to the latter's allies, the Cilician Armenians. He succeeded in capturing the important southern Anatolian port of Attaleia in 1207, but in 1211 the Seljuks were defeated at Antioch on the Maeander by the Lascarids and their Italian mercenaries, and Kay-Khusraw I was killed in action.

The operations of Kay-Khusraw's successors were directed mainly against the Grand Comnenid of the empire of Trebizond, from whom Kay-Kawus I (1211–1220) took Sinope in 1214, but the Seljuk army of Kay-Qubadh I (1220–1237) failed to capture Trebizond in 1222–1223 (a previous unsuccessful attempt having taken place in 1205–1206). Kay-Qubadh also faced attacks from John III Ducas Vatatzes of Nicaea between 1222/1225 and 1231, while he also led an expedition against Crimea (1227/1228) and participated in an eastern alliance that defeated the Khwarazm shah Jalal al-Din Mangubirti in 1231. The brunt of the imminent Mongol invasion of Anatolia, however, was reserved for Kay-Qubadh's successor, Kay-Khusraw II, shortly after an internal religious insurrection led by Baba Isaq (1240/1241) had threatened the Rum throne. On June 26, 1243, the Mongol Il-Khanid dynasty under Baidju crushed the forces of the Rum Seljuks and their Latin and Trapezuntine allies at Satala. It was now too late for the Nicaean-Seljuk alliance (August 1243) to be effective, and from then onward the Rum sultanate declined to the status of a protectorate of the Mongol Il-Khanid empire, in which most of the sultans were mere puppets in the hands of Il-Khanid governors. The period from the mid-13th century, with a long list of ineffectual Seljuk nominal sultans, witnessed a gradual spread of Turkoman emirates (*beyliks*) in Anatolia. The most powerful of these developed into the Ottoman Empire.

Alexios G. C. Savvides

See also: *Organization and Administration: Il-Khanate*

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Trebizond

Trebizond, the modern-day Trabzon, is a city now of nearly 250,000 located on the northeast coast of Turkey. It was supposedly founded in 756 BCE during the first wave of Greek colonization by colonists from Mellitus, the owner of a number of colonies situated along the southern Black Sea littoral. These were well positioned for local trade including with the groups of the Caucasus, the home of the magical Golden Fleece of Greek legend. Trebizond, then Trapezous, is mentioned in Xenophon's “March of the Ten Thousand” as a point reached by the Greeks in their retreat. Later it was part of the Pontic Empire and then the Roman Empire and was particularly important under the Romans although going into decline after the third century and declining even more under the Byzantines in part due to the dislocation of local trade routes and a general economic recession taking place at the end of the ancient world.

By the time of the appearance of the Mongols in Iran and Anatolia during the third decade of the 13th century, Trebizond had recovered much of its earlier commercial importance, but the advances of the Seljuks left it somewhat isolated, far distant from the Byzantine capital of Constantinople, hanging over an interior that by then belonged to the Turks. This isolation probably encouraged centrifugal tendencies there. These were also apparent in many other parts of the Byzantine Empire in the 12th and 13th centuries. It became an independent empire under a branch of the ruling Comnenos family in 1204, even before the fall of the Byzantine capital of Constantinople to the crusaders, and continued to be so until 1461, when it became one of the last former parts of the Byzantine world to be conquered by the Ottomans.

Even before the establishment of the Mongol Il-Khanate in Iran in the 1250s and more or less complete Mongol control over a Seljuk dependency in central Anatolia, Trebizond became very rich due to trade with other Black Sea groups as well as with Venice and Genoa, European economic superpowers. With the destruction of Abbasid

Baghdad by Hulegu in 1258, Trebizond, by then physically bordering on the new Il-Khanate, became one of several dominant markets for the overland Silk Road trade stretching across Central Asia, southern Russia, and Iran. This was a trade very much protected by the Mongols. After the fall of a unified Mongol Empire in 1260, the il-khans continued imperial policy even if they did not control the entire overland Silk Road, and in any case they found an independent Trebizond and a revived Byzantine Empire (after 1261) a convenience. In the latter case it prevented the two main enemies of the il-khans, the Mamluks of Egypt and the Golden Horde, from free communication with each other via the Dardanelles. Constantinople was also a major headquarters for the Italian states even after the Byzantines became an independent empire again.

In the case of Trebizond, an existing trade at first shifted north from a Persian Gulf connection, where it carried on to Baghdad or came overland via the north Iran from the Central Asian overland Silk Road to that same point. From there the trade went on to the Mediterranean. Much of it on the eastern end was already carried on large Indian Ocean ships, although most still went from port to port rather than sailing directly. After the fall of Baghdad, at first Tabriz in the Il-Khanate was the center of a combined land and sea trade that still passed on to the Mediterranean, but later the Mediterranean littoral, controlled by the Mamluks, was bypassed in favor of a route through Ormuz, Shiraz, Tabriz, and Trebizond and then Constantinople and from there to Europe.

Trebizond, already a true way station between East and West, became even more important with its direct connection to a by then major Indian Ocean maritime Silk Road. Developed with direct sailings, not port to port, it stretched from China down the Southeast Asian coast, across the Indian Ocean past India, and then up the Persian Gulf to places such as Kisch and Ormuz and then on to Tabriz, where it was fully controlled by the Mongols, and Trebizond, where the Indian Ocean trade connected with Black Sea and Mediterranean trade controlled mainly by the Genoese and Venetians.

Trade along this route first emerged in full swing at the very end of the 13th century and persisted unabated until around 1340, when the Il-Khanate fell apart. Among those traveling along it was Marco Polo, who not only returned to Europe by sea, across the Indian Ocean, but also entered the Black Sea via Trebizond. Beside his voyage, showing the flow of the period is an early 15th-century Korean map, a copy of a probably 14th-century Yuan dynasty original, showing a straight run from Korea into the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. It even shows Africa as a continent surrounded entirely by water with European points on the other side.

After the fall of the Il-Khanate, Trebizond remained an important trading point. Land trade persisted even if ocean trade was cut, but like most of the area, its trade was affected by the Black Plague, continued conflict between the Italian city-states, and internal civil wars. By the 15th century the Trebizond Empire continued to exist at the sufferance of the Ottomans, who finally conquered the city in 1461 after already ending the Byzantine Empire in 1453, except for former Byzantine holdings at Mistra, in the Peloponnesus, conquered the same year as Trebizond.

Paul D. Buell

See also: *Government and Politics:* Tabriz; *Organization and Administration:* Golden Horde; Il-Khanate; *Individuals:* Hulegu; *Groups and Organizations:* Italians; *Key Events:* Black Death; *Key Places:* Mamluk Sultanate

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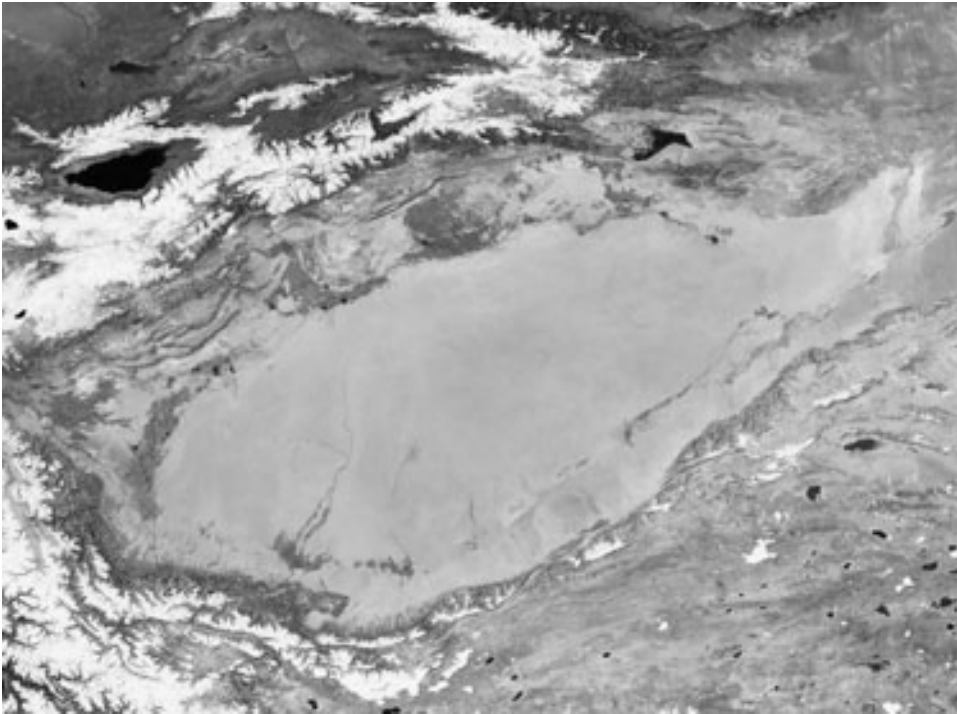
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Uyghuristan

The place known in the 19th and early 20th centuries as Uyghuristan, spanning the Tarim Basin depression and the northern and eastern slopes of the Tianshan Mountains, was known in the time of the Mongol Empire as the kingdom of the Uyghur *idiquit* (ruler) at Gaochang and Beiting (winter and summer capital cities, respectively, called in the Uyghur language Qocho and Beshbaliq).

It was fitting that the Tarim Basin Uyghur kingdom was known mainly by its oasis cities in that time, because the Uyghurs were more closely associated with settled agricultural and commercial lifestyles than nomadic ones by the time they established their kingdom in that region. Yet the Uyghur peoples who lived in the Tarim Basin kingdom came from a long line of nomads, and they continued to follow that nomadic lifestyle after they had been displaced out of the steppe into the Tarim Basin area. For example, the separate winter and summer capitals suited seasonal grazing patterns followed by nomads. The northern capital city Beiting also continued to be renowned for its horses, used by the Uyghur ruling class and traded with China in return for other luxury goods. At the same time, the move out of the steppe pushed the Uyghur ruling class even more to adopt a sedentary lifestyle, because now they controlled the major east-west trade routes. By the time they submitted to the Mongols in 1209, Uyghur material and spiritual culture had definitely shifted from a focus on nomadic to settled interests, all of which reflected their new home south of the steppe in that zone between east and west, north and south, steppe and sown.

International trade and mercantile activities had long been a part of the oasis cities that were located along the northern and southern fringes of the Tarim Basin, because the traditional east-west trade routes (the so-called Silk Road) ran right through them. In fact, it was to control the profits from that trade that the Uyghurs had exerted political control over the area back when they ruled their own steppe empire. Because it straddled the trade routes the area was a natural meeting place of peoples and cultures, and that rich diversity was certainly evident in the Uyghur kingdom that was constructed in the



Satellite photo of the Tarim Basin, Asia. After the Uyghur Empire fell in 844, the Uyghurs created a new kingdom in modern Xinjiang, which included the arid Tarim Basin and several caravan cities along the Silk Road. (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)

mid-ninth century. Chinese, Iranians, Sogdians, Tibetans, Tokharians, and others all met in the great oasis cities, and the Uyghur elite quickly became adroit managers of that scene. That cultural melting pot was the direct result of international trade. And along with trade and merchants always came religion. In fact, more than the commercial activities that took place there, the Uyghur kingdom was known for its religious pluralism and freedom. This was noted by many medieval travelers who passed through the region. Three separate Buddhist cultures thrived there (still in evidence today in the many Buddhist caves with statuary, paintings, and written texts found in the area). Nestorian Christians had their priests and churches alongside thriving Persian Manichaean temples. Monks, nuns, monasteries, temples, and churches dominated the Uyghur cities. The one exception to that religiously diverse culture was Islam, which was scorned by the Uyghur ruling elite and did not take hold for another 300 years.

The reputation of the Uyghurs as multilingual managers and statesmen was enhanced once they settled into the Tarim Basin, where several writing systems were used by the various religious communities as well as traders and local residents. The Uyghurs themselves became known for their production of both sacred and secular literature, much of which survives. In addition to making a good living brokering international commerce, the Uyghurs also thrived on the products of their own land. Their cities were

described by Muslim writers of the time as rich in agricultural and handicraft products. Chinese sources describe a wide range of products brought into China by the Uyghurs, including precious stones (jade, diamonds), fruits, grains, cotton, wool and silk textiles, and livestock.

Since the Uyghur state occupied a strategic zone between the steppes to the north, China to the east, the Muslim states to the west, and Tibet to the south, the Uyghur king had to be a very savvy political actor to survive. Part of his strategy was to enact good tributary and trade relations with his neighbors. Because the Uyghur king submitted voluntarily to Chinggis in 1209, he was allowed to rule his state with minimal Mongol oversight, and his descendants continued to enjoy the appointment to that office until Khubilai lost control of the area to his cousin. It undoubtedly benefited Chinggis to have a trustworthy ally in charge of that strategically important area, one who could also now direct a sizable portion of the income reaped by the Uyghurs from their control of trade into the Mongol coffers. The Uyghurs were also an important military ally for the Mongols; the Uyghurs had continued to practice their mounted military skills and horse breeding, and the Uyghur king led a detachment of Uyghur cavalry alongside the Mongols in several critical campaigns to the west and east. Unlike most other states in Central Asia that were parceled out to Chinggis's sons on his death, the Uyghur Tarim Basin kingdom was under the direct control of the grand khan. This special relationship was the result of their early submission and was cemented by Chinggis adopting the Uyghur king as a "fifth son" and giving him a daughter in marriage. Even after Khubilai lost control of the Uyghur kingdom, the Uyghur royal clan continued to be appointed to that position, but then in exile in China where they nonetheless enjoyed the perquisites of high office. Other Uyghurs who served the Mongols in various parts of their empire also enjoyed high-level positions as officials and technicians because of this rich heritage.

Michael C. Brose

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; Khubilai Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Nestorian Christians; Semuren; Uyghurs

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Xi Xia (1038–1227)

Although Xi Xia is forgotten in history, it played a pivotal role in the history of the Mongol Empire. It was the first kingdom outside of Mongolia conquered by the

Mongols and also the location of Chinggis Khan's death. Despite its role in the rise of the Mongol Empire, Xi Xia has a history that merits attention in its own right.

Xi Xia was formed by the Tangut, a people who originated from the vicinity of Gansu and Sichuan Provinces in China and Tibet. They spoke a language related to Tibetan and Yi, the language of an ethnic group found in Yunnan. The Tangut moved into the region that became Xi Xia (modern-day Gansu and Ningxia Provinces and parts of Inner Mongolia) during the Tang dynasty (618–907). After the collapse of the Tang dynasty, the Tangut under the Li family were able to expand their authority, pushing back the Uyghurs and Tibetans. By 1038, Li Yuanhao declared himself emperor and established the Xia dynasty, which ruled over a mixed population of sedentary Chinese, Tangut, and others as well as nomadic populations of Tibetans and Turks, including the Onggud. Despite his claims of being emperor, he was still a tributary of the Song Empire. He also ordered the creation of a writing system for the Tangut language, based on Chinese, to help administer his new empire. He used a Chinese-style government but was also influenced by Buddhism.

Although Li Yuanhao originally gravitated to Chinese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism became the primary form for the Tangut population and was instrumental in shaping the court of Xi Xia. In this the ruler was seen as an incarnate figure. Xi Xia also forged strong ties with the Liao dynasty (907–1125) through marriage alliances. With Liao aid, the Xi Xia were able to break away from the Song. With the rapid rise of the Jin Empire and the collapse of the Liao dynasty, Xi Xia became a tributary of the Jin Empire. In return, Xi Xia secured virtual independence. Xi Xia also dominated the Gansu corridor, an important leg of the Silk Road, which made it wealthy.

While Xi Xia was often overshadowed by the Jin Empire and the Song Empire and thus focused its foreign relations on these two superpowers, Xi Xia also had close ties to the nomads of Mongolia. The royal family intermarried with the Kereit and even gave shelter to Kereit leaders when they fell out of favor or were forced to flee due to war. One such example was Senggum, the son of Toghrlil Ong Khan, the ruler of the Kereit during Chinggis Khan's rise to power.

Indeed, it was Senggum's flight to Xi Xia in 1203 after the Mongol victory over the Kereit that brought the kingdom into direct contact with the Mongols. Chinggis Khan did not deal with Senggum until 1205, after he decisively defeated the Naiman. As punishment for harboring Senggum, Chinggis Khan plundered the border of Xi Xia. Unbeknownst at the time, the government of Xi Xia had exiled Senggum for his own rapacious activities.

Regardless, Chinggis Khan invaded once again in 1207, sacking Wulhai, an important border city. The armies of Xi Xia found no success against the Mongols. In 1209, Chinggis Khan then invaded Xi Xia in earnest. No longer content with raiding, the Mongols sought to secure the submission of Xi Xia. The reasons for the change in policy are not clear but may have been connected with the fact that the Uyghurs also submitted in the same year as did the Qarluqs. Wulhai once again fell before the Mongol onslaught, and then the ruler of Xi Xia submitted to Chinggis Khan after a siege of Zhongxing, the capital.

The siege was not an overwhelming success. The Mongols had attempted to divert the Huanghe River to flood the city. They achieved this but also flooded their own camp. This demonstration was enough to convince the emperor of Xi Xia, Li Anquan (r. 1206–1211), to submit to the Mongols. Peace was secured, with tribute consisting of gold, silk, and vast numbers of camels as well as a promise to provide troops when necessary. The Mongols did not occupy Xi Xia.

When the Mongols fought the Jin, Xi Xia provided troops and were active on the Xi Xia and Jin border in the Ordos region in 1211. In other invasions of the Jin, Xi Xia was reluctant to provide troops, requiring another Mongol intercession. In the end, they promised 50,000 men to support Muqali while Chinggis Khan invaded the Khwarazmian Empire. These troops never arrived, which undermined Muqali's campaigns in Shaanxi.

After Muqali died in 1223, Xi Xia rebelled, taking advantage of Chinggis Khan's absence, as he was still in the Khwarazmian Empire. The rebellion spurred Chinggis Khan's return with the goal of destroying Xi Xia. Xi Xia attempted to negotiate, but it was clear that Chinggis Khan was weary of his reluctant vassal state. Armies invaded the Gansu corridor in 1226 and sacked the caravan cities. Other cities were also eliminated one by one until Zhongxing was isolated. The last emperor of Xi Xia, Li Xian (r. 1226–1227), submitted in July 1227 while Chinggis Khan was on his deathbed. After Chinggis Khan's death, the Mongols massacred Zhongxing's population and executed the royal family. In doing so they ensured that Xi Xia would never be thought of as anything other than part of the Mongol Empire.

Timothy May

See also: *Organization and Administration:* Muqali; *Writing Systems:* *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Kereit; Naiman; Onggud; Tangut; Uyghurs; *Key Events:* Chinggis Khan, Death of; *Key Places:* Khwarazmian Empire; Song Empire; Yunnan

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Xiangyang, Siege of (1267–1273)

The capture of the city of Xiangyang was a turning point in Khubilai Khan's conquest of the Song Empire. It also marked a dramatic shift in Mongol strategy, as they switched

from a pronged attack on multiple sectors of the Song Empire to a more focused assault on a single location. Xiangyang and its sister city of Fancheng were located in the modern-day province of Hubei on opposite banks of the Han River. Its location was of great strategic importance, as it was key to the Yangtze River Basin. The seizure of the cities, particularly Xiangyang, opened the rest of the Song Empire to Mongol attacks. However, capturing it was not an easy matter, as it was strongly fortified with a citadel, walls, and a deep moat in addition to the river protecting one side of the city.

The siege began in 1267–1268, with the Mongols assaulting the city not only with siege weapons but also with their new navy. The siege served as an excellent example of the polyglot nature of the Mongol attacks, as it was led by two Chinese generals: Liu Zheng, a Uyghur Turk who joined the Mongols after running afoul with the Song court, and Aju Noyan, a Mongol. In addition, two Middle Easterners, Ismail and Ala al-Din, commanded the artillery.

The siege progressed in a deliberate manner as ships blockaded the Chinese cities and the Mongol army captured outlying villages and towns, commandeering their ships and impressing the villagers as oarsmen. A fleet of 500 ships blockaded the city while fortifications were built south of Xiangyang along the river to cut off attempts to relieve or supply it via the river. The garrison of Xiangyang attempted to break through the Mongol lines, only to be repulsed. The Mongols beheaded their captives. The Song attempted to relieve the city. In August 1269 a Song fleet of 3,000 ships attempted to break the blockade and relieve the city, but the Mongol fleet fended it off while capturing several of the Song vessels. The blockade made it also difficult for Xiangyang and Fancheng to support each other.

Meanwhile, the Mongols continued to build a series of ramparts around Xiangyang's 3.7 miles (6 kilometers) of walls and its moat, which was 295 feet (90 meters) wide. Similar efforts occurred at Fancheng. Nonetheless, it was impossible to prevent some blockade-runners or messengers from getting through the Mongol flotilla and defenses. Although the Mongols did not expect the siege to be a quick victory, the fact that they could not completely isolate the city prolonged the attack for five years.

Indeed, even with their successes, Aju, the Mongol commander, requested that Khubilai Khan send him 70,000 men and an additional 5,000 ships in 1270. Even with the reinforcements, the city stymied all Mongol efforts to breach its defenses. The obstinacy of the Song resistance is not surprising. The Song saw this as a life-and-death struggle against the Mongols. In addition, Song generals on the outside gave rich rewards to men who could sneak through the Mongol lines with messages to the city and make the equally dangerous return journey. They were also determined to break the Mongol blockade. At times they were successful. In addition, the garrison at Xiangyang continued to sally from behind their defenses and disrupt the Mongol siege. In 1270 despite repeated attempts, all Song counterattacks failed, with heavy casualties. One attempt included a sortie of 10,000 men, which failed ignobly.

The Song did not rely on naval forces alone in their attempt to relieve the city. Most of the attacks failed, however, as the Mongol forces proved superior in field battles. One attack, however, in 1272 did succeed in breaking through the Mongol lines and entering the city. Their victory was pyrrhic, as most of the much-needed reinforcements,

including several officers, were killed in the process of penetrating Mongol lines. Yet even when outside forces attempted to relieve the city they rarely had a chance, as the soldiers were often children or old men, hastily assembled and sent to war.

The siege gradually exhausted Xiangyang's defenders; nonetheless, they continued their resistance. The Mongols did not make significant headway in ending the siege until the arrival of Muslim engineers from the Middle East. In 1272, they arrived at Xiangyang with a new technology: the counterweight trebuchet. Having a superior range and capable of launching heavier missiles, the trebuchet had an immediate impact.

Initially, the two trebuchets built by Ismail and Ala al-Din were used on towns across the river from Xiangyang. Then they turned them against Xiangyang. The noise and damage they caused was terrifying. No wall could resist their missiles; furthermore, their range nullified the height advantages that the Song trebuchets had from their defenses. General Lu, the commander of Xiangyang, attempted to hold out, but the Mongols stationed both machines on the southeast corner of the city to concentrate their firepower. Resistance was futile. After a few days of bombardment General Lu finally conceded defeat and surrendered after resisting the Mongol attack for five years.

The Siege of Xiangyang is a testament of the power of the Mongol Empire. A mixed army of Chinese, Mongols, and Turks fought the Song Empire of southern China for five years on land and on the water. When those efforts failed, they produced a new weapon from another region of the empire. The resources and innovations of the empire were simply too great for any other state to resist.

Timothy May

See also: *Military:* Trebuchet; *Primary Documents:* Document 27

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Yunnan

The province that we know today as Yunnan, in far southwestern China, did not exist before the Mongol conquests. For centuries that area was home to two independent states called Nanzhao and Dali, both of which had more cultural and ethnic ties to people in Southeast Asia than to China. There were several attempts by Chinese states to conquer the area before the 13th century, but none were successful. The strength of

these states was based to a large degree on the rugged geography of the region and the fact that the important north-south trade routes ran through the area, linking China to the Indian Ocean. From China's perspective, that region was always considered as a frontier zone, wild and dangerous because of the many non-Chinese tribes who dominated the area but also holding great potential benefit to the Chinese state should the independent states there ever be successfully controlled.

When the grand khan Mongke turned his attention to completing the conquest of China by subduing the Chinese Song state, he understood that a frontal assault from the north would be a perilous undertaking for his Mongol troops. An easier route, he discovered, would be a flanking move whereby the Mongol troops would come at the Song state from the west, through the southwest. Thus, in 1253 he sent his younger brother, Prince Khubilai, south with a large contingent of troops to gain control of the southwest, which meant conquering the independent Dali state. The Mongols succeeded in crushing that state, and Khubilai then immediately returned to northern China, leaving a small group of Mongols to maintain control of the local population and to prepare the area as a base of operations for military campaigns both against China and into Southeast Asia. For the next 20 years the region was left largely to its own devices because Mongol attentions were turned to other campaigns, including those against Song China. Then in 1273 Khubilai, who was now the grand khan of the entire empire, sent a trusted Muslim general and administrator named Sayyid Ajall Shams al-Din to act as governor of the area that had by that time become integrated into China as a regular province called Yunnan.

Sayyid Ajall's administration initiated a long history of Muslim administration of Yunnan during the Mongol Yuan dynasty and in the succeeding Ming dynasty. Yunnan was unique among the provinces of China under the Mongols in being governed by Muslims in that late imperial period, and Khubilai's appointment of Sayyid occurred at the same time that he had initiated an anti-Muslim policy in other parts of China. Sayyid Ajall was far from a dogmatic Muslim and in fact became known for his efforts to build up new agricultural infrastructure in the province to boost local productivity and wealth. He was also known for promoting Confucian teachings in the province by building imperial Confucian temples and recruiting Confucian experts to come to Yunnan. These were all policies that any provincial governor would have carried out to ensure the loyalty of the locals to the far-off emperor, and Sayyid's actions and policies in Yunnan did much to bring the various tribal leaders and the areas they controlled firmly into China's embrace.

Because the new province was so recently the base of an independent state and many of the tribes were used to a large degree of autonomy, the Mongols brought in large numbers of troops who were stationed in military garrisons at strategic places, especially along the trade routes that crossed the province. While those troops were also initially used in a series of military campaigns into various parts of Southeast Asia, they were eventually settled permanently in Yunnan, where their garrison outposts evolved into permanent settlements. Since many of those troops were Muslims, that history of troop migration laid the foundation for strong Muslim communities in Yunnan that still exist today.

While the creation of the new province of Yunnan and its incorporation into China may have been in some respects accidental, not the original goal of the Mongols who invaded the area in the 1250s, it quickly became an important part of Mongol China. The province held enormous deposits of several precious metals, especially silver, which became the basis of the Yuan economy. In fact, at least half of the total amount of silver that was imported by the Yuan state came from Yunnan mines. Yunnan also became a convenient buffer between China and Southeast Asia at that time but now a buffer that the Chinese state controlled. Mongol creation of Yunnan and incorporation into China also brought about a different kind of “China” that set the stage for the China that we know today, a state with important new territories that expanded its reach into Southeast Asia, a state that now included a much more diverse population, and a province that encouraged the establishment of Islam as a normative part of the Chinese religious universe. That legacy of the Mongol construction of Yunnan and its inclusion into China lives on today. Yunnan Province is home to 25 different non-Chinese ethnic groups, the most diverse of any province; its ancient cultural and geographic ties to Southeast Asia are increasingly important to China’s international diplomacy; and it is a province where Chinese Muslims are increasingly playing roles as the economic elite, with growing ties to the wider Muslim world. All of this resulted from the Mongols’ initial probing of the area merely as a way to conquer southern China.

Michael C. Brose

See also: *Government and Politics:* Immigrant Religions in Mongol China; *Individuals:* Khubilai Khan; Mongke Khan; *Key Events:* Mongol Conversion to Islam; *Key Places:* Song Empire

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Zhongdu

Zhongdu was the capital of the Jin Empire (1125–1234), which was located in northern China. Built in the environs of modern-day Beijing (which was built during the Ming dynasty), this impressive city held a population that approached 1 million people. Defended by strong walls and outlying fortresses and combined with the fact that the Jin Empire was one of the most technologically advanced civilizations in the 13th century, Zhongdu was impressive and thought to be impregnable. In the end, it was not.

Mongol attacks on the Jin Empire began in 1211. Although the Jin possessed larger armies, they lacked the brilliance of Chinggis Khan and his generals. The Mongols crushed the Jin defenses in the mountain passes and pillaged the suburbs of Zhongdu by January 1212. Zhongdu became an island as the surrounding towns and villages surrendered or suffered Mongol plundering before they withdrew, laden with booty.

In the fall of 1212, Mongol armies once again spread across the Jin Empire, pillaging as they went. The Jin did not sit idly by and countered some of the attacks, including two Mongol forces north of Zhongdu. Despite Jin successes, the Mongols attacked the outskirts of Zhongdu a third time and annihilated the Jin army sent against them. With this defeat, the Jin court extended an olive branch and promised a considerable amount of tribute in December 1213. Chinggis Khan, however, rejected the peace offering.

Although the war continued, Chinggis Khan did not lay siege to Zhongdu. Instead, he left 5,000 men to patrol and blockade Zhongdu. He then divided his army into three forces that attacked different parts of the Jin Empire. The three-pronged attack devastated the rest of the empire and made it difficult for the Jin armies to coordinate their efforts, forcing them to remain on the defensive.

Meanwhile, the garrison of Zhongdu discovered that they could not attack on the Mongols outside the city. Although small in number, the blockading force moved quickly—retreating when the garrison sallied against them and attacking when the garrison attempted to return to Zhongdu. The constant harassment unnerved the garrison, as they worried that Chinggis Khan might suddenly descend upon the city. Relief forces met similar harassment from the blockading force. Furthermore, few generals felt confident enough to send large forces while the other Mongol armies marched unopposed through the empire.

In late February or March 1214, Chinggis Khan launched two unsuccessful attacks on Zhongdu, which failed to take the city but convinced the Jin to renew peace negotiations. Weary of war, the Jin negotiated a peace treaty that gave Chinggis Khan the daughter of the previous emperor, 500 boys and girls for her retinue, 3,000 horses, and several carts loaded with gold and silk—a significant increase from the previous effort. Content with this amount, Chinggis Khan and the Mongol army withdrew north.

A peaceful respite between Chinggis Khan and the Jin Empire remained brief. Due to the ease with which the Mongols penetrated the Jin mountain defenses, the looming threat of a Mongol attack, and the devastation on the territory surrounding Zhongdu, the Jin emperor moved south for practical safety reasons.

Chinggis Khan viewed this move as a violation of the treaty and a hostile action. For the Mongols, it raised the question of why the emperor moved if he wanted peace. In his mind the Jin planned for war, and the emperor moved to a more strategic location. Thus, in September 1214 an army of 50,000 surrounded Zhongdu. The Mongols, however, resumed their blockade rather than making direct attacks against the city. They realized that they lacked the manpower to completely encircle the city and assault it, so they hoped to starve the city into submission.



Mongolian general Samuqa besieging Zhongdu, from Rashid al-Din's *Jami' al-Tawarikh* (*Compendium of Chronicles*), 14th century. The Jin capital fell after a siege in 1215, although it would take another 20 years for the Jin Empire to fall. (Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images)

As the siege continued, some Jin commanders attempted to relieve the city. In April 1215, two such armies were defeated. Afterward, no other attempts were made. The plight of the Jin worsened afterward, as they saw other cities fall to the Mongols throughout the month of May, leaving Zhongdu isolated. Meanwhile, as the blockade continued, cannibalism occurred, and the commanders of the defense squabbled over the best course of action.

Finally, in June 1215 Zhongdu surrendered to the Mongols. Afterward, Chinggis Khan returned north while his armies looted the city. Khwarazmian merchants who visited the city months after the siege ended noted the slaughter; bodies piled as high as hills, and the roads were slick with grease from human fat. And while these stories as well as one relating that 60,000 virgins leapt from the walls to their deaths rather than be ravished by the Mongol soldiery should be taken with a

grain of salt, it is clear that the Mongol sack of Zhongdu was on an immense scale.

The fall of Zhongdu not only served as a great military defeat for the Jin but also undermined the defense of other territories. Many places simply surrendered rather than trying to resist the Mongol onslaught any further. Rebellion broke out and spread across the dwindling Jin Empire. Some of the rebels submitted to the Mongols, while others attempted to create their own kingdoms. The Mongols dealt with the latter harshly. Furthermore, forces from the Song Empire and the Tangut kingdom to the west invaded. However, the Jin could hold off Tangut and Song attacks but not the Mongols. Nonetheless, the Jin Empire struggled on until 1234, partially because Chinggis Khan became distracted by events in Central Asia that led him and most of the army west.

Timothy May

See also: *Individuals:* Chinggis Khan; *Groups and Organizations:* Jurchen; *Key Events:* Jin Empire, Fall of the; *Military:* Siege Warfare; *Key Places:* Jin Empire; Khwarazmian Empire; *Primary Documents:* Document 4

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PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

I. IBN AL-ATHIR ON THE MONGOL INVASION OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD (EARLY 13TH CENTURY)

Many people viewed the coming of the Mongols as an apocalyptic event. Few knew who the Mongols were or where they came from. Furthermore, in an era fraught with war and destruction, the Mongols brought destruction to a new level. In the Islamic world, the Mongols also were a new twist. Dar al-Islam, the abode of Islam, should only expand. Yet beginning in 1219, the pagan Mongols began to conquer the Islamic world. For many Muslims, it truly seemed not only a punishment for their sins but also the end of times. One such observer was the great medieval chronicler Ibn al-Athir (1160–1233) of Mosul. Although Mosul was spared from the initial attacks, the news of the Mongols terrified all who heard it. In this excerpt, Ibn al-Athir draws comparison with biblical disasters and indicates that the Mongols were far worse than the Antichrist.

For several years I continued to avoid mention of this disaster as it horrified me and I was unwilling to recount it. I was taking one step towards it and then another back. Who is there who would find it easy to write the obituary of Islam and the Muslims? For whom would it be a trifling matter to give account of this? Oh, would that my mother had not given me birth! However, a group of friends urged me to record it, although I was hesitant. I saw then that to leave it undone was of no benefit, but we state that to do it involves recounting the most terrible disaster and the greatest misfortune, one the like of which the passage of days and nights cannot produce. It comprised all mankind but particularly affected the Muslims. If anyone were to say that since God (glory and power be His) created Adam until this present time mankind has not had a comparable affliction, he would be speaking the truth. History books do not contain anything similar or anything that comes close to it.

One of the greatest disasters is what Nebuchadnezzar did to the Israelites, slaughtering them and destroying Jerusalem. What is Jerusalem in relation to the lands that these cursed ones destroyed, where each city is many times larger than Jerusalem? And what are the Israelites compared with those they killed? Amongst those they killed the inhabitants of a single city are more numerous than were the Israelites. Perhaps humanity will not see such a calamity, apart from Gog and Magog, until the world comes to an end and this life ceases to be.

As for the Antichrist, he will spare those who follow him and destroy those who oppose him, but these did not spare anyone. On the contrary, they slew women, men and children. They split open the bellies of pregnant women and killed the foetuses. . . .

Source: Ibn al-Athir, *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kamil fi'l-ta'rikh*, Part 3, translated by D. S. Richards (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 202.

2. IBN AL-ATHIR ON MONGOL INVASIONS OF THE NEAR EAST (EARLY 13TH CENTURY)

Ibn al-Athir was an Arab historian who spent much of his life in the city of Mosul (in present-day Iraq). One of his major works is al-Kamil fi al-tarikh (The Complete History). Below is al-Athir's account of the invasion of Islamic territory by Mongol forces (here called Tartars) in about 1220. Al-Athir obtained his information from firsthand witnesses, and he describes the great destructiveness and swiftness of the invasions throughout a large area of the Near East. He also mentions certain customs that made the Mongols especially effective invaders. Al-Athir concludes by asking for divine protection for the Muslims against the Mongol threat.

For some years I continued averse from mentioning this event, deeming it so horrible that I shrank from recording it, and ever withdrawing one foot as I advanced the other. To whom, indeed, can it be easy to write the announcement of the death-blow of Islam and the Muslims, or who is he on whom the remembrance thereof can weigh lightly? O would that my mother had not born me, or that I had died and become a forgotten thing ere this befell! Yet withal a number of my friends urged me to set it down in writing, and I hesitated long; but at last came to the conclusion that to omit this matter [from my history] could serve no useful purpose.

I say, therefore, that this thing involves the description of the greatest catastrophe and the most dire calamity (of the like of which days and nights are innocent) which befell all men generally, and the Muslims in particular; so that, should one say that the world, since God Almighty created Adam until now, hath not been afflicted with the like thereof, he would but speak the truth. For indeed history doth not contain aught which approaches or comes nigh unto it. . . . Nay, it is unlikely that mankind will see the like of this calamity, until the world comes to an end and perishes. . . . Verily to God do we belong, and unto Him do we return, and there is no strength and no power save in God, the High, the Almighty, in face of this catastrophe, whereof the sparks flew far and wide, and the hurt was universal; and which passed over the lands like clouds driven by the wind.

For these were a people who emerged from the confines of China, and attacked the cities of Turkistan, like Kashghar and Balisaghun, and thence advanced on the cities of Transoxiana, such as Samarqand, Bukhara and the like, taking possession of them, and treating their inhabitants in such wise as we shall mention; and of them one

division then passed on into Khurasan, until they had made an end of taking possession, and destroying, and slaying, and plundering, and thence passing on . . . even to the limits of Iraq, whence they marched on the towns of Adharbayjan and Arraniyya, destroying them and slaying most of their inhabitants, of whom none escaped save a small remnant; and all this in less than a year; this is a thing whereof the like hath not been heard.

And when they had finished with Adharbayjan and Arraniyya, they passed on to Darband-i-Shirwin, and occupied its cities, none of which escaped save the fortress wherein was their King; wherefore they passed by it to the countries of the Lan and the Lakiz and the various nationalities which dwell in that region, and plundered, slew, and destroyed them to the full. And thence they made their way to the lands of Qipchaq, who are the most numerous of the Turks, and slew all such as withstood them, while the survivors fled to the fords and mountain-tops, and abandoned their country, which these Tartars overran. All this they did in the briefest space of time, remaining only for so long as their march required and no more.

Another division, distinct from that mentioned above, marched on Ghazna and its dependencies, and those parts of India, Sistan and Kirman which border thereon, and wrought therein deeds like unto the other, nay, yet more grievous. Now this is a thing the like of which ear hath not heard; for Alexander [the Great], concerning whom historians agree that he conquered the world, did not do so with such swiftness, but only in the space of about ten years; neither did he slay, but was satisfied that men should be subject to him. But these Tartars conquered most of the habitable globe, and the best, the most flourishing and most populous part thereof, and that whereof the inhabitants were the most advanced in character and conduct, in about a year; nor did any country escape their devastations which did not fearfully expect them and dread their arrival.

Moreover they need no commissariat, nor the conveyance of supplies, for they have with them sheep, cows, horses, and the like quadrupeds, the flesh of which they eat, [needing] naught else. As for their beasts which they ride, these dig into the earth with their hoofs and eat the roots of plants, knowing naught of barley. And so, when they alight anywhere, they have need of nothing from without. As for their religion, they worship the sun when it arises, and regard nothing as unlawful, for they eat all beasts, even dogs, pigs, and the like; nor do they recognise the marriage-tie, for several men are in marital relations with one woman, and if a child is born, it knows not who is its father.

Therefore Islam and the Muslims have been afflicted during this period with calamities wherewith no people hath been visited. These Tartars (may God confound them!) came from the East, and wrought deeds which horrify all who hear of them. . . .

We ask God to vouchsafe victory to Islam and the Muslims, for there is none other to aid, help, or defend the True Faith. But if God intends evil to any people, naught can avert it, nor have they any ruler save Him.

Source: Edward Granville Browne, ed., *A Literary History of Persia* (New York: Scribner, 1906), 427–430.

3. ROBERT OF CLARI'S DESCRIPTION OF THE KIPCHAKS (ca. 1205)

The Mongols sought to incorporate all pastoral steppe nomads into their armies because they fought in a similar manner. Robert of Clari took part in the Fourth Crusade that captured Constantinople in 1204. Although he never encountered the Mongols, his description of the swift movements of the Kipchaks could easily apply to the Mongols. One can see why the Kipchaks made up the bulk of the Mongol armies in the west and also were desirable as Mamluks.

Now we will tell you what they do. Each one has at least ten or twelve horses, and they have them so well trained that they follow them wherever they want to take them, and they mount first on one and then on another. When they are on a raid, each horse has a bag hung on his nose in which his fodder is put, and he feeds as he follows his master, and they do not stop going by night or by day. And they ride so hard that they cover in one day and one night fully six day's journey, or seven or eight. And while they are on the way they will not seize anything or carry it along, before their return, but when they are returning, then they seize plunder and make captives and take anything they can get. Nor do they go armed, except that they wear a garment of sheepskin and carry bows and arrows.

Source: Robert of Clari, *The Conquest of Constantinople*, translated by Edgar Holmes McNeal (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 87–88.

4. THE CHRONICLER JUZJANI'S ACCOUNT OF THE CAPTURE OF ZHONGDU (1214)

The 13th-century chronicler known as Juzjani fled from the Khwarazmian Empire during the Mongol invasions. He escaped to Delhi in northern India, where he wrote about the Mongols as part of a large history on Muslim rulers. Here he relates a story in which the Khwarazmian ruler, Muhammad II Khwarazmshah (1169–1220), learns about the Mongol capture of the city of Zhongdu in the Jin Empire, which the Muslims called Tamghaj (a general term for China). Altun Khan refers to the Jin emperor, whom the Mongols called Altan Khan. The narrator is Sayyid Ajall, Baha al-Din, a Bukharan who was sent to Chinggis Khan (1164–1227) as an ambassador and at some point entered Chinggis's service. It is not clear whether this happened with the fall of the Khwarazmian Empire or perhaps before. In any event, the Mongols were perfectly happy to have their neighbors believe the worst of them, and the story of the fall of Zhongdu is said to have filled Muhammad II Khwarazmshah's heart with dread.

When we arrived within the boundaries of Tamghaj, and near to the seat of government of the Altun Khan, from a considerable distance a high white mound appeared in sight, so distant, that between us and that high place was a distance of two or three

stages, or more than that. We, who were the persons sent by the Khwarazm Shahi government, supposed that white eminence was perhaps a hill of snow, and we made inquiries of the guides and the people of that part [respecting it], and they replied “The whole of it is the bones of men slain.” When we had proceeded onwards another stage, the ground had become so greasy and dark from human fat, that it was necessary for us to advance another three stages on that same road, until we came to dry ground again. . . . On reaching the gate of the city of Tamghaj, we perceived, in a place under a bastion of the citadel, an immense quantity of human bones collected. Inquiry was made, and people replied, that, on the day the city was captured 60,000 young girls, virgins, threw themselves from this bastion of the fortress and destroyed themselves, in order that they might not fall captives into the hands of the Mughal forces, and that all these were their bones.

Source: Minhaj ud-Din Juzjani, *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*, 3rd reprint, translated by Major H. G. Raverty, 3rd reprint (Kolkata: Asiatic Society, 2010), 965.

5. ACCOUNT OF THE OTRAR MASSACRE (1219)

Upon receiving merchants from Khwarazm, Chinggis Khan (1164–1227) sent back a letter and his own caravan consisting of 500 camels, all laden with gold, silver, furs, and silks, as well as a gold nugget the size of a camel’s neck. It was an immense caravan that would undoubtedly excite greed in anyone who saw it. Chinggis Khan clearly sought trade, but the actions of Ghayir (Kadr Khan), the governor of Otrar (Utrar), triggered a war that removed the Khwarazmian Empire from the map. The governor arrested the merchants, and the Khwarazm ruler Muhammad II (1169–1220) later had them executed. The Otrar Massacre was a serious affront to Chinggis Khan and convinced him to attack the Khwarazmian Empire in 1219. The first paragraph below is from Chinggis Khan’s letter to Muhammad II.

“Say ye unto Khwarazm Shah, ‘I am the sovereign of the sun-rise, and thou the sovereign of the sun-set. Let there be peace between us a firm treaty of friendship, amity, and peace, and let traders and *karwans* on both sides come and go, and let the precious products and ordinary commodities which may in my territory be conveyed by them into thine, and those of thine, in the same manner, let them bring into mine.”

When Utrar was reached, Kadr Khan of Utrar acted in a perfidious manner, and sought permission from Sultan Muhammad, Khwarazm Shah, out of covetousness of that large amount of gold and silver, had the whole of the traders and travellers, and the emissaries, slaughtered, so that not one among them escaped, with the exception of a camel man who was at a bath, who during that occurrence, managed to get out by way of the fireplace of the hot-bath, adopted a contrivance for his own safety, and, by way of the desert, returned to the territories of Chin and Tamghaj.

When he acquainted the Chingiz Khan with the particulars of that perfidy, and as Almighty God had so willed that this treachery should be the means of the empire of

Islam, it became evident that “the command of God is an inevitable decree,” and the instruments of the predetermined will of fate became available—From Thy wrath preserve us, Oh God!

Source: Minhaj ud-Din Juzjani, *Tabakat-i-Nasiri*, 3rd reprint, translated by Major H. G. Raverty (Kolkata, India: Asiatic Society, 2010), 966–967.

6. CHINGGIS KHAN'S INVITATION TO THE DAOIST MONK K'IU CH'ANG CH'UN (MAY 15, 1219)

K'iu Ch'ang Ch'un, or Kiu Chang Chun (1148–1227) as his name is written in Pinyin transliteration, was a senior Daoist monk and head of the Quanzhen Daoist sect. It was rumored that he knew the secrets to immortality, which attracted the interest of Chinggis Khan (1164–1227). Although Chinggis was about to invade the Khwarazmian Empire, he requested that the elderly monk (approximately 72 years old) meet with him. Chang Chung was assisted in his journey by a junior monk, Li Chi ch'ang, who recorded the journey. The following is Chinggis Khan's invitation. The Kin are the Jin Empire, the Sung is the Song Empire, Hia refers to Xi Xia, and the Hui are Muslims, most likely meaning the Khwarazmian Empire.

Heaven has abandoned China owing to its haughtiness and extravagant luxury. But I, living in the northern wilderness, have not inordinate passions. I hate luxury and exercise moderation. I have only one coat and one food. I eat the same food and am dressed in the same tatters as my humble herdsmen. I consider the people my children, and take an interest in talented men as if they were my brothers. We always agree in our principles, and we are always united by mutual affection. At military exercises I am always in the front, and in time of battle am never behind. In the space of seven years I have succeeded in accomplishing a great work, and uniting the whole world in one empire. I have not myself distinguished qualities.

But the government of the Kin is inconstant, and therefore Heaven assists me to obtain the throne (of the Kin). The Sung to the south, the Hui-ho to the north, the Hia to the east, and the barbarians in the west, all together have acknowledged my supremacy. It seems to me that since the remote time of our shan yü such a vast empire has not been seen. But as my calling is high, the obligations incumbent on me are also heavy; and I fear that in my ruling there may be something wanting. To cross a river we make boats and rudders. Likewise we invite sage men, and choose out assistants for keeping the empire in good order. Since the time I came to the throne I have always taken to heart the ruling of my people; but I could not find worthy men to occupy the places of the three (kung) and the nine (k'ing). With respect to these circumstances I inquired, and heard that thou, master, hast penetrated the truth, and that thou walkest in the path of right. Deeply learned and much experienced, thou hast much explored the laws. Thy sanctity is become manifest. Thou hast conserved the rigorous rules of the ancient sages. Thou art endowed with the eminent talents of celebrated men. For a long time

thou hast lived in the caverns of the rocks, and hast retired from the world; but to thee the people who have acquired sanctity repair, like clouds on the path of the immortals, in innumerable multitudes. I knew that after the war thou hadst continued to live in Shan tung, at the same place, and I was always thinking of thee. I know the stories of the returning from the river Wei in the same cart, and of the invitations in the reed hut three times repeated. But what shall I do? We are separated by mountains and plains of great extent, and I cannot meet thee. I can only descend from the throne and stand by the side. I have fasted and washed. I have ordered my adjutant, Liu Chung lu, to prepare an escort and a cart for thee. Do not be afraid of the thousand li. I implore thee to move thy sainted steps. Do not think of the extent of the sandy desert. Commiserate the people in the present situation of affairs, or have pity upon me, and communicate to me the means of preserving life. I shall serve thee myself. I hope that at least thou wilt leave me a trifle of thy wisdom. Say only one word to me and I shall be happy. In this letter I have briefly expressed my thoughts, and hope that thou wilt understand them. I hope also that thou, having penetrated the principles of the great tao, sympathisest with all that is right, and wilt not resist the wishes of the people.

Given on the 1st day of the 5th month (May 15), 1219.

Source: Li Chi ch'ang, "The Travels of Ch'ang Ch'un to the West, 1220–1223," in *Mediaeval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources*, translated by E. Bretschneider (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1888), 37–39.

7. DESCRIPTION OF THE BOQTA HEADDRESS OF MONGOLIAN WOMEN (ca. 1219)

K'iu Ch'ang Ch'un, or Kiu Chang Chun (1148–1227), was a senior Daoist monk and head of the Quanzhen Daoist sect. He had been summoned to join Chinggis Khan (1164–1227), who sought the secret to immortality. Despite the assistance of his disciple Li Chi Ch'ang, who accompanied him and recorded their travels, the elderly Daoist monk had difficulty finding the Mongol leader, who had departed to invade the Khwarazmian Empire. Chang Chun did arrive in Mongolia and stayed at the camps of the Mongols, where he saw the boqta, the peculiar headdresses of the Mongol women.

The population was numerous, all living in black carts and white tents. The people are engaged in breeding cattle and hunting. They dress in furs and skins, and live upon milk and flesh-meat.

The men and unmarried young women plait their hair so that it hangs down over their ears. The married women put on their heads a thing made of the bark of trees, two feet high, which they sometimes cover with woollen cloth, or, as the rich used to do, with red silk stuff. This cap is provided with a long tail, which they call *gu-gu*, and which resembles a goose or duck. They are always in fear that somebody might inadvertently run against this cap. Therefore, when entering a tent, they are accustomed to go backward, inclining their heads.

Source: Li Chi ch'ang, "The Travels of Ch'ang Ch'un to the West, 1220–1223," in *Mediaeval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources*, translated by E. Bretschneider (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1888), 52–53.

8. EXCERPT FROM WU-KU-SUN CHUNG TUAN'S ACCOUNT OF HIS EMBASSY TO CHINGGIS KHAN IN CENTRAL ASIA (ca. 1220)

While Chinggis Khan (1164–1227) was campaigning against the Khwarazmian Empire in 1220, an emissary from the Jin Empire traveled from China to find Chinggis in Central Asia. This envoy, Wu-ku-sun Chung Tuan, or Wugusun Zhong Duan as his name is spelled in current transliterations, recorded his journey, which included an account of the formation of Kara Khitai, a state that was established by Khitan who fled when the Jurchen created the Jin Empire out of the ashes of the Liao Empire (907–1125). The record of his travels is known as the Pei Shi Ki.

In the seventh month (August) of the year 1220, Wu-ku-sun Chung tuan, vice-president of the Board of Rites, was entrusted by the emperor (U-tu-bu of the Kin dynasty) with a mission to the northern court. An T'ing chen, secretary in the Academy, was appointed his assistant. Wu-ku-sun returned in the tenth month (October or November) of 1221, when he addressed me in the following terms:

I have been sent a distance of ten thousand li west of the border of heaven, and not wishing all the curious things I saw in my travels to remain unrecorded, I therefore request you to write down my narrative.

In the twelfth month (January) of 1220 I passed the northern Frontier (of the Kin empire), and proceeded in a north-western direction, where the ground rises gradually. Advancing parallel with (the northern frontier of) the Hia empire, after having travelled seven or eight thousand li, I arrived at a mountain. East of it all rivers flow to the east; west of it they run to the west, and the ground gradually descends. Farther on, after travelling four to five thousand li, the climate becomes very hot. I passed through more than a hundred cities; not one of them had a Chinese name. Inquiring about the country, I was told that many tribes were living there, namely, the Mo-li-hi, the Mo-k'o-ti, the Ho-li-ki-sz', the Nai-man, the Hang-li, the Gai-gu, the T'u-ma, and the Ho-lu; all are barbarian tribes.

Farther on I travelled over several tens of thousands of li, and arrived at the city of I-li in the country of the Hui-ho. There is the residence of the king of (or of a king of) the Hui-ho. We were then in the first decade of the fourth month (beginning of May).

The empire of Ta-shi, or the great K'i-tan, was formerly in the middle of the country of the Hui-ho (Mohammedans). Ta-shi Lin-ma belonged to the people of the Liao. T'ai tsu liked him for his intelligence and eloquence, and gave him a princess as wife. But Ta-shi secretly bore the emperor ill-will. At the time the emperor moved his arms to the west, Ta-shi was at first with him, but afterwards he took his family and fled beyond the mountains (probably Altai). Then he assembled the tribes on the frontier and emigrated to the north-west. On their wanderings they rested at places abounding in water and pastures. After several years they arrived at the Yin shan mountain, but could not penetrate owing

to the rocks and the snow. They were obliged to leave their carts behind, and to carry their baggage on camels. Thus they arrived in the country of the Hui-ho (Mohammedans), took possession of the land and founded an empire. From day to day Ta-shi's power increased; he reigned some thirty years and more, and after death was canonised as Te tsung. When he died his son succeeded. The latter was canonised as Jen tsung. After his death, his younger sister, by name Kan, took charge of the regency; but as she held illicit intercourse and killed her husband, she was executed. Then the second son of Jen tsung came to the throne. Owing to his appointing unworthy officers, the empire fell into decay, and was finally destroyed by the Hui-ho. At the present day there are few of these people left, and they have adopted the customs and the dress of the Hui-ho.

The empire of the Hui-ho (Mohammedans) is very vast and extends far to the west. In the fourth or fifth month (May, June) there the grass dries up, as in our country in winter. The mountains are covered with snow even in the hottest season of the year. When the sun rises it becomes hot, but as soon as it sets it gets cold. In the sixth month (July) people are obliged to use wadded coverlets. There is no rain in summer; it is only in autumn that it begins to fall. Then the vegetation shoots forth; and in winter the plains become green like our country in spring, and herbs and trees are in blossom.

Source: Wu-ku-san Chung Tuan, "Description of the West by a Chinese Envoy, 1220," in *Medieval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources*, translated by E. Bretschneider (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1888), 26–29.

9. CHINGGIS KHAN'S ORATION AT THE SACK OF BUKHARA (ca. 1220)

When Chinggis Khan (1164–1227) invaded the Khwarazmian Empire in 1219, he not only devastated that empire but also sought the treasure that was stolen from the caravan massacred at Otrar. When he received word that it was at Bukhara, he marched 300 miles behind enemy lines in a surprise attack on the city. When he captured it, he went into the great mosque and berated the population. The passage below from the Jami'u't-Tawarikh (Compendium of Chronicles) is probably a manufactured quote because it fits too patently into Islamic theology, but nonetheless it provides a glimpse into how the population viewed Chinggis Khan.

He mounted the pulpit in the festival prayer space, and after enumerating the sultan's acts of opposition and treachery in great detail, he said, "O people, know that you are great sinners, and your leaders are at the head of the pack in sin. You ask me why I say this. I say it because I am the scourge of God. If great sins had not been committed by you, the great God would not have sent you one like me as a torment."

Source: Rashiduddin Fazlullah, *Jami'u't-Tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles; A History of the Mongols*, Vol. 2, translated by W. M. Thackston (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, 1998), 247.

10.A DESCRIPTION OF MAWARANNAHR BY YELU CHUCAI (ca. 1220)

When Chinggis Khan (1164–1227) invaded the Khwarazmian Empire after the Otrar Massacre, his adviser Yelu Chucai (1190–1244), who was a Khitan, accompanied him and left a detailed account of the lands they traveled through. His description of Mawarannahr is valuable because it is an account of the region during the invasion. Yelu Chucai omits any description of the destruction visited on the region by the Mongols, viewing the area as an administrator with an interest in taxation and the production of resources.

West of O-ta-la more than a thousand li is a large city called Sün-sz'-kan [=Samarkand]. Western people say that the meaning of this name is “fat,” and, as the land there is very fertile, the city received this name. The country there is very rich and populous. They have gold and copper coins, but their coins are not provided with a hole, nor have they rims (as the Chinese copper coins have). Around the city, to an extent of several tens of li, there are everywhere orchards, groves, flower gardens, aqueducts, running springs, square basins, and round ponds, in uninterrupted succession; indeed, Sün-sz'-kan is a delicious place! The water-melons there are as large as a horse’s head. Regarding grain and vegetables, however, the shu, the no, and the ta tou are not found there. It does not rain there in summer. People make wine from grapes. There are mulberry trees, but not fit for the breeding of silkworms. All cloths are made of kü-sün. The white colour for cloth is considered as a good omen, whilst black is the mourning colour. Wherefore all clothes seen there are white.

West of Sun-sz'-kan (Samarkand) six to seven hundred li is the city of P'u hua [=Bukhara]. It abounds in every kind of products, and is richer than Samarkand. There is the residence of the so-li-t'an of the Mou-su-lu-man (Musselman) people. The cities of K'u-djan (Khodjend) and O-ta-la (Otrar), and others, all depend on P'u hua.

West of Bokhara [Pu' hua] there is a great river (the Amu-daria), flowing to the west, which enters a sea. West of this river is the city U-li-ghien [=Urgench], where the mother of the so-li-tan is living. This city is still more rich and populous than Bokhara.

To the west (mistake for south), near the western border of the same great river (Amu-daria), is the city of Ban [=Balkh]; and west of the latter is the city of Chuan [=T'uan?]. Farther on, direct west (mistake for south), one reaches the city of the black Yin-du. Their writing is different from that in use in the Buddhist kingdoms (Sanskrit) as regards the letters and the pronunciation. There are many idols of Buddha. The people there do not kill cows or sheep; they only drink the milk of these animals. Snow is unknown there. Every year they reap two crops. It is so hot there that a vessel of tin put in the sand melts immediately. Even by moonlight one is hurt as on a summer day (in China by sunbeams).

Source: Yelu Chucai, “Account of a Journey to the West (Si Yu Lu), 1219–1224,” In *Mediaeval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources*, translated by E. Bretschneider (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1888), 21–23.

11. JALAL AL-DIN REQUESTS HELP AGAINST THE MONGOLS (ca. 1230)

The last Khwarazmshah, Jalal al-Din (d. 1231), attempted to create an empire in West Asia. In 1230, he was defeated by an alliance of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum and the Sultanate of Aleppo. Before Jalal al-Din's arrival in the west, these two kingdoms were enemies. They both, however, found Jalal al-Din to be a great enough threat to put aside their hostilities. After his defeat, Jalal al-Din appealed for aid to both of his former enemies as well as to the Abbasid caliph for help against the Mongols under Chormaqan, who had begun to hunt him. Jalal al-Din's appeal, reproduced in part below, mentions the Wall of Alexander, a mythical wall built by Alexander the Great to stop the hordes of Gog and Magog, who would bring about the apocalypse. The Mongols were often considered to be their offspring, and Jalal al-din's assessment of the consequences of his defeat (given in the first paragraph below) were prophetic. The second paragraph below is an attempt by the Persian historian Juvaini (1226–1283) to explain why other Muslim rulers did not help Jalal-al-din. Despite the Mongol threat, the fact that no one aided Jalal al-Din reveals that many viewed the Khwarazmshah as an equally serious threat.

If I am removed, you cannot resist them. I am to you as the Wall of Alexander. Let each one of you send a detachment with a standard to support me, and when the news of our accord and agreement reaches them, their teeth will be blunted and our army in good heart.

. . . The powerful fortune and auspicious ascendant of the Emperor of the World, Chingiz-Khan, threw their words into disagreement and changed the Sultan's hope into despair and disappointment.

Source: 'Ala-ad-Din 'Ata-Malik Juvaini, *Genghis Khan: History of the World Conqueror*, translated by J. A. Boyle (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 452.

12. JOHN OF PLANO CARPINI'S DESCRIPTION OF THE MONGOLS (1240s)

John of Plano Carpini (ca. 1185–1252) observed the Mongols closely while on a diplomatic mission for the pope in the 1240s. One of aspect of his mission to the Mongols was to learn as much as possible to help with the defense of Christendom. He marveled, as did others, at the endurance of the Mongols and how they thrived in the harshest conditions. In this passage from his report on his trip, Carpini notes how little food they eat as well as their punishments and their training for war.

They boil millet in water and make it so thin that they cannot eat it but have to drink it. Each one of them drinks one or two cups in the morning and they eat nothing more during the day; in the evening, however, they are all given a little meat, and they drink the meat broth. But in the summer, seeing they have plenty of mare's milk, they seldom

eat meat, unless it happens to be given to them or they catch some animal or bird when hunting.

If anyone is found in the act of plundering or stealing in the territory under their power, he is put to death without any mercy. Again, if anyone reveals their plans, especially when they intend going to war, he is given a hundred stripes on his back, as heavy as a peasant can give with a big stick.

The men do not make anything at all, with the exception of arrows, and they also sometimes tend the flocks, but they hunt and practise archery, for they are all, big and little, excellent archers, and their children begin as soon as they are two or three years old to ride and manage horses and to gallop on them, and they are given bows to suit their stature and are taught to shoot; they are extremely agile and also intrepid. All the women wear breeches and some of them shoot like the men.

Source: John of Plano Carpini, “History of the Mongols,” in *The Mongol Mission: Narratives and Letters of the Franciscan Missionaries in Mongolia and China in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries*, edited by Christopher Dawson, translated by a Nun from Stanbrook Abbey (London: Sheed and Ward, 1955), 17–18.

13. JOHN OF PLANO CARPINI’S DESCRIPTION OF MONGOL ARMOR (1240s)

The major component of John of Plano Carpini’s (ca. 1185–1252) papal mission to the Mongols in the 1240s was to gather information about the Mongols and how they made war so that Christendom could be better prepared to defend against them. Thus, John took great interest in all things military, including how they manufactured armor. From the detailed description below, one can reconstruct Mongol armor.

Some have cuirasses and protection for their horses, fashioned out of leather in the following manner: they take strips of ox-hide or the skin of another animal, a hand’s breath wide and cover three or four together with pitch, and they fasten them with leather thongs or cord; in the upper strip they put the lace at one end, in the next they put it in the middle and so on to the end; consequently, when they bend, the lower strips come up over the upper ones and thus there is a double or triple thickness over the body.

The cuirass is made in four parts. One piece stretches from the thigh to the neck, but is shaped to fit the human figure, being narrow across the chest, and curved round the body from the arms downwards; behind, over the loins, they have another piece which reaches from the neck and meets the first piece encircling the body; these two sections, namely the front one and the back, are fastened with clasps to two iron plates, one on each shoulder; also on each arm they have a piece stretching from the shoulder to the hand and open at the bottom, and on each leg another piece. All these sections are fastened together by clasps.

Some of the Tartars have all the things we have mentioned made of iron in the following fashion: they make a number of thin plates of the metal, a finger's breadth wide and a hand's breadth in length, piercing eight little holes in each plate; as a foundation they put three strong narrow straps; they then place the plates one on top of the other so that they overlap, and they tie them to the straps by narrow thongs which they then laced through the afore-mentioned holes; at the top they attach a thong, so that the metal plates hold together firmly and well. They make a strap out of these plates and then join them together to make sections of armor as has been described above. They make these into armour for horses as well as men and they make them shine so brightly that one can see one's reflection in them.

Source: John of Plano Carpini, "History of the Mongols," in *Mission to Asia*, edited by Christopher Dawson, translated by a Nun from Stanbrook Abbey (Toronto: University Press of Toronto, 1980), 33–34.

14. JOHN OF SARRASIN'S LETTER TO NICHOLAS OF ARRODE DESCRIBING A MONGOL PLOY (JUNE 23, 1249)

John of Sarrasin, the chamberlain of France, accompanied King Louis IX (1214–1270) on the Seventh Crusade (148–1254). While on Cyprus, the French king received emissaries from the Mongol Empire. They were sent by the tanma commander, Eljigidei, who assumed his position during the reign of Guyuk Khan (r. 1246–1248). In the letter reproduced below, John of Sarrasin describes the envoys' visit to his friend Nicholas of Arrode; written at Damietta, Egypt, during the crusade, the letter is dated June 23, 1249. As shown in the letter, there was a reason why King Louis was hopeful of an alliance with the Mongols. The prince referred to as Aljigidai is Guyuk.

It so happened that the previous Christmas, Aljigidai, one of the great princes of the Tartars, who was a Christian, had sent his envoys to the king of France at Nicosia in Cyprus. The king sent Brother Andrew [Longjumeau, a Dominican] of the Order of St. James to meet them. The envoys had no idea who was to greet them but they knew him and he knew them all well as we know each other. The king summoned the envoys into his presence and they spoke at length in their language, with Brother Andrew translating into French for the king; the greatest prince of the Tartars had become a Christian at Epiphany along with many other Tartars, including their most important lords. They also said that Aljigidai would put all his Tartar army in support of the king of France and Christendom in their fight against the caliph of Baghdad and the Saracens, because he wanted to take revenge on the Khwarazmians and the other Saracens for the shame and the great losses they had inflicted on our Lord Jesus Christ and Christendom. They added that their lord also requested that the king should travel via Egypt in the spring to combat the sultan of Babylon while at the same time the Tartars would invade the land of the caliph of Baghdad and attack him to prevent him from coming to each other's aid.

Source: “John Sarrasin, Chamberlain of France, to Nicholas Arrode (23 June, 1249)” in *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims and Settlers in the 12th–13th Centuries*, edited and translated by Malcolm Barber and Keith Bates (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 147–148.

15. DESCRIPTION OF PRINCE ALEXANDER NEVSKY FROM THE NIKONIAN CHRONICLE (1250s)

Although the Mongols did not sack Novgorod, Prince Aleksandr (Alexander) (1221–1263) submitted and became a valued vassal of the Mongols. The Nikonian Chronicle paints his submission in the most favorable of terms and depicts Aleksandr as a powerful figure who even frightens the Mongols—referred to here as Moabites, the biblical enemies of the Hebrews. In doing so, the unknown author of the Nikonian Chronicle makes it clear that the Mongols are evil.

He arrived at the glorious city of Vladimir with vast forces and his arrival was awesome. Word of his awesome arrival spread down to the mouth of the Volga, and the women of the Moabites frightened their children with his name, saying, “Hush! Grand Prince Aleksandr is coming!” . . . When Khan Batu saw him he marveled and told his magnates, “It is true, what you have told me—that there is none equal to this prince,” and he greatly honored him and gave him gifts.

Source: Serge A. Zenkovsky, ed., *The Nikonian Chronicle*, Vol. 3, translated by Serge A. Zenkovsky and Betty Jean Zenkovsky (Princeton, NJ: Kingston, 1986), 23.

16. WILLIAM OF RUBRUCK ENJOYS KUMISS (1250s)

Unlike his fellow Franciscan, John of Plano Carpini, William of Rubruck took more than a cursory interest in the fermented milk beverage known as kumiss (airag) that was (and still is) so beloved by the steppe nomads. Not only did he take an interest in its production, but he also enjoyed the taste.

This *cosmos*, which is mare’s milk, is made in this wise. They stretch a long rope on the ground fixed to two stakes stuck in the ground, and to this rope they tie toward the third hour the colts of the mares they want to milk. Then the mothers stand near their foal, and allow themselves to be quietly milked; and if one be too wild, then a man takes the colt and brings it to her, allowing it to suck a little; then he takes it away and the milker takes its place. When they have got together a great quantity of milk, which is as sweet as cow’s as long as it is fresh, they pour it into a big skin or bottle, and they set to churning it with a stick prepared for that purpose, and which is as big as a man’s head at its lower extremity and hollowed out; and when they have beaten it sharply it begins to boil up like new wine and to sour or ferment, and they continue to churn it until they have extracted the butter. Then they taste it, and when it is mildly pungent,

they drink it. It is pungent on the tongue like râpé wine [i.e., a wine of inferior quality] when drunk, and when a man has finished drinking, it leaves a taste of milk of almonds on the tongue, and it makes the inner man most joyful and also intoxicates weak heads, and greatly provokes urine. They also make *cara cosmos* that is “black *cosmos*,” for the use of the great lords. It is for the following reason that mare’s milk curdles not. It is a fact that (the milk) of no animal will curdle in the stomach of whose fetus is not found curdled milk. In the stomach of mares’ colts it is not found, so the milk of mares curdles not. They churn then the milk until all the thicker parts go straight to the bottom, like the dregs of wine, and the pure part remains on top, and it is like whey or white must. The dregs are very white, and they are given to the slaves, and they provoke much to sleep. This clear (liquor) the lords drink, and it is assuredly a most agreeable drink and most efficacious. Baatu has thirty men around his camp at a day’s distance, each of whom sends him every day such milk of a hundred mares, that is to say every day the milk of three thousand mares, exclusive of the other white milk which they carry to others. As in Syria the peasants give a third of their produce, so it is these (Tartars) must bring to the *ordu* of their lords the milk of every third day. As to cow’s milk they first extract the butter, then they boil it down perfectly dry, after which they put it away in sheep paunches which they keep for that purpose; and they put no salt in the butter, for on account of the great boiling down it spoils not. And they keep this for the winter. What remains of the milk after the butter they let sour as much as can be, and they boil it, and it curdles in boiling, and the curd they dry in the sun, and it becomes as hard as iron slag, and they put it away in bags for the winter. In winter time, when milk fails them, they put this sour curd, which they call *gruit*, in a skin and pour water on it, and churn it vigorously till it dissolves in the water, which is made sour by it, and this water they drink instead of milk. They are most careful not to drink pure water.

Source: W. W. Rockhill, ed. and trans., *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55, as Narrated by Himself, with Two Accounts of the Earlier Journey of John of Pian de Carpine* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1900), 67–69.

17. WILLIAM OF RUBRUCK’S DESCRIPTION OF MONGKE’S DRINKING FOUNTAIN (1250s)

The Mongols greatly enjoyed alcoholic beverages. The best testimonial to this is the ornate fountain that Mongke had constructed in Karakorum by a skilled artisan known as William the Parisian—a Frenchman who was captured by the Mongols in Hungary. William of Rubruck (ca. 1220–ca. 1293) became friends with William the Parisian and most likely gained much of his detailed knowledge directly from the fountain’s creator.

Mangu had at Caracarum a great palace, situated next to the city walls, enclosed within a high wall like those which enclose monks’ priories among us. Here is a great palace, where he has his drinkings twice a year: once about Easter, when he passes there, and once in summer, when he goes back (westward). And the latter is the greater (feast),

for then come to his court all the nobles, even though distant two months journey; and then he makes them largess of robes and presents, and shows his great glory. There are there many buildings as long as barns, in which are stored his provisions and his treasures. In the entry of this great palace, it being unseemly to bring in there skins of milk and other drinks, master William the Parisian had made for him a great silver tree, and at its roots are four lions of silver, each with a conduit through it, and all belching forth white milk of mares. And four conduits are led inside the tree to its tops, which are bent downward, and on each of these is also a gilded serpent, whose tail twines round the tree. And from one of these pipes flows wine, from another *cara cosmos*, or clarified mare's milk, from another *bal*, a drink made with honey, and from another rice mead, which is called *terraccina*; and for each liquor there is a special silver bowl at the foot of the tree to receive it. Between these four conduits in the top, he made an angel holding a trumpet, and underneath the tree he made a vault in which a man can be hid. And pipes go up through the heart of the tree to the angel. In the first place he made bellows, but they did not give enough wind. Outside the palace is a cellar in which the liquors are stored, and there are servants all ready to pour them out when they hear the angel trumpeting. And there are branches of silver on the tree, and leaves and fruit. When then drink is wanted, the head butler cries to the angel to blow his trumpet. Then he who is concealed in the vault, hearing this blows with all his might in the pipe leading to the angel, and the angel places the trumpet to his mouth, and blows the trumpet right loudly. Then the servants who are in the cellar, hearing this, pour the different liquors into the proper conduits, and the conduits lead them down into the bowls prepared for that, and then the butlers draw it and carry it to the palace to the men and women.

Source: W. W. Rockhill, ed. and trans., *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55, as Narrated by Himself, with Two Accounts of the Earlier Journey of John of Pian de Carpine* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1900), 207–208.

18. WILLIAM OF RUBRUCK'S ACCOUNT OF THE DISTINCTIVE MONGOL HAIRSTYLE (1250s)

William of Rubruck (ca. 1220–ca. 1293) came to the Mongols as a missionary and unofficial envoy of King Louis IX (1214–1270) of France. William's observation about Mongol hairstyles is quite detailed. The importance of this is that the Mongols made their hair quite distinct and imposed this on all the nomads they recruited or drafted for their armies. Thus, once receiving this hairstyle, one could not desert easily because one's hair was so distinctive.

The men shave a square on the tops of their heads, and from the front corners (of this square) they continue the shaving to the temples, passing along both sides of the head. They shave also the temples and the back of the neck to the top of the cervical cavity, and the forehead as far as the crown of the head, on which they leave a tuft of hair which falls down to the eyebrows. They leave the hair on the sides of the head, and with it they make tresses which they plait together to the ears.

Source: W. W. Rockhill, ed. and trans., *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55, as Narrated by Himself, with Two Accounts of the Earlier Journey of John of Pian de Carpine* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1900), 72.

19. WILLIAM OF RUBRUCK'S DESCRIPTION OF YURTS (1250s)

The yurt, also known as the ger, the circular tent of the Mongols, always created interest in visitors to the Mongol Empire. Those unaccustomed to the nomadic life were fascinated with its construction. Cithia refers to ancient Scythia, a generic term that most Europeans used for the steppes north of the Black Sea.

Nowhere have they fixed dwelling-places, nor do they know where their next will be. They have divided among themselves Cithia, which extendeth from the Danube to the rising of the sun; and every captain, according as he hath more or less men under him, knows the limits of his pasture land and where to graze in winter and summer, spring and autumn. For in winter they go down to warmer regions in the south: in summer they go up to cooler towards the north. The pasture lands without water they graze over in winter when there is snow there, for the snow serveth them as water. They set up the dwelling in which they sleep on a circular frame of interlaced sticks converging into a little round hoop on the top, from which projects above a collar as a chimney, and this (framework) they cover over with white felt. Frequently they coat the felt with chalk, or white clay, or powdered bone, to make it appear whiter, and sometimes also (they make the felt) black. The felt around this collar on top they decorate with various pretty designs. Before the entry they also suspend felt ornamented with various embroidered designs in color. For they embroider the felt, colored or otherwise, making vines and trees, birds and beasts.

And they make these houses so large that they are sometimes thirty feet in width. I myself once measured the width between the wheel-tracks of a cart twenty feet, and when the house was on the cart it projected beyond the wheels on either side five feet at least. I have myself counted to one cart twenty-two oxen drawing one house, eleven abreast across the width of the cart, and the other eleven before them. The axle of the cart was as large as the mast of a ship, and one man stood in the entry of the house on the cart driving the oxen. . . .

When they have fixed their dwelling, the door turned to the south, they set up the couch of the master on the north side. The side for the women is always the east side, that is to say, on the left of the house of the master, he sitting on his couch his face turned to the south. The side for the men is the west side, that is, on the right. Men coming into the house would never hang up their bows on the side of the woman.

Source: W. W. Rockhill, ed. and trans., *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55, as Narrated by Himself, with Two Accounts of the Earlier Journey of John of Pian de Carpine* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1900), 53–58.

20. MATTHEW PARIS ON THE FEAR PROVOKED BY THE APPROACH OF THE MONGOLS (1250s)

Matthew Paris (ca. 1200–1259) was a monk who wrote his chronicle from the safety of England, far from the Mongol invasions. Nonetheless, he took great interest in their military activity. As they invaded Europe, Matthew also learned of their activities in the Islamic world. The following account summarizes the dread in Islamic lands that stemmed from the Mongol approach. In Matthew's summary, the Mongols are more akin to a natural disaster than to humans.

Roving through the Saracen territories, they razed cities to the ground, burnt woods, pulled down castles, tore up the vine trees, destroyed gardens, and massacred the citizens and husbandmen; if by chance they did spare any who begged their lives, they compelled them, as slaves of the lowest condition, to fight in front of them against their own kindred.

Source: Matthew Paris, *English History*, Vol. 1, translated by J. A. Giles (New York: AMS Press, 1968), 312.

21. CH'ANG TE'S DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSASSINS (1250s)

Chang Te or Chang De accompanied Hulegu (1217–1265) and his army on his campaign to the Middle East, and his account of his journey, known as the Si Shi Ki, details the campaign. Chang Te was sent as an envoy of Mongke Khan (1209–1259). The report itself was written by Liu Yu upon Chang Te's return. The work was incorporated into later histories during the Yuan, Ming, and Qing dynasties. Although the account focuses on geography, Chang Te also provides abstracts of the major events of the campaign along with background content. Here, he recites a popular story about the Assassins, whom the Mongols defeated in 1256. Mu-la-hi is the Chinese equivalent of Mullahid, a term denoting heretic and used by Sunni Muslims to describe the Nizari Ismailis, also known as Seven Shia Muslims because they recognized seven imams. Compare this passage with Marco Polo's (1254–1324) account.

The army of the *Mu-la-hi* consisted exclusively of Assassins. They were accustomed, when they saw a young man, to seduce him by holding out some advantage, and brought him to feel no repugnance to assassinating his father or brother. After this they enrolled him, and having been intoxicated by wine, he was carried into a cavern, and there diverted by music and fair damsels. During several days all his wishes were gratified. Finally, he was carried again to the former place, and when he awoke they asked him what he had seen, and informed him that if he would agree to become a *tz'e-k'o* (Assassin) he would enjoy after death all that happiness by which he was surrounded. Then they gave him every day certain prayers and exorcisms to read. Finally,

(his heart became so captivated that) he was not afraid to execute any commission, and accomplish it without fear of death. The Mu-la-hi sent their emissaries secretly to the countries which had not yet submitted, with orders to stab the rulers. It was the same regard to women. (I understand they were also sent to assassinate.) The realm of the Mu-la-hi was hated in the western countries. During forty years they had spread terror through the neighbouring kingdoms, but when the imperial army arrived they were exterminated; not one escaped.

Source: Ch'ang Te, "Si Shi Ki," in E. Bretschneider, trans., *Mediaeval Researches from Eastern Asiatic Sources* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1888), 135–136.

22. LETTER OF MONGKE TO KING LOUIS IX OF FRANCE (1250s)

William of Rubruck (ca. 1220–ca. 1293) served as an unofficial envoy for King Louis IX (1214–1270) of France. Because King Louis was seeking an alliance with the Mongols against the Mamluk Sultanate, William carried a letter from Mongke (1209–1259) to Louis. From Mongke's letter to Louis, which is reproduced below, it is clear that Mongke did not view Louis as an equal and that he expected King Louis IX to come and submit to him. Sartach was the son of Batu (Baatu). William traveled to Karakorum with another Franciscan friar named Bartholomew of Cremona (a city in Italy).

These two monks, who have come from you to Sartach, Sartach sent to Baatu; but Baatu sent them to us, for Mangu Chan is the greatest lord of the Mo'al realm. Now then, to the end that the whole world and the priests and monks may be in peace and rejoice, and that the word of God be heard among you, we wanted to appoint Mo'al envoys (to go back) with these your priests. But they replied that between us and you there is a hostile country, and many wicked people, and bad roads; so they were afraid that they could not take our envoys in safety to you; but that if we would give them our letter containing our commandments, they would carry them to King Louis himself. So we do not send our envoys with them; but we send you in writing the commandments of the eternal God by these your priests: the commandments of the eternal God are what we impart to you. And when you shall have heard and believed, if you will obey us, send your ambassadors to us; and so we shall have proof whether you want peace or war with us. When, by the virtue of the eternal God, from the rising of the Sun to the setting, all the world shall be in universal joy and peace, then shall be manifested what we are to be. But if you hear the commandment of the eternal God, and understand it, and shall not give heed to it, nor believe it, saying to yourselves: 'Our country is far off, our mountains are strong, our sea is wide,' and in this belief you make war against us, you shall find out what we can do. He who makes easy what is difficult, and brings close what is far off, the eternal God He knows.

Source: W. W. Rockhill, ed. and trans., *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55, as Narrated by Himself, with Two Accounts of the Earlier Journey of John of Pian de Carpine* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1900), 250–251.

23. DESCRIPTION OF WILLIAM OF RUBRUCK'S AUDIENCE WITH MONGKE KHAN (MAY 31, 1254)

William of Rubruck (ca. 1220–ca. 1293), a Franciscan friar sent by King Louis IX (1214–1270) of France to Karakorum, finally had a private audience with Mongke Khan, or Mangu Chan as William called him, on May 31, 1254. William's translator was the son of William the Parisian, a Frenchman who had been captured in Hungary by the Mongols. William attended the audience with a Toyin (Tuin in Rubruck's account), or Buddhist monk. What followed was a discussion of Mongke's view on religion, which generally sums up the Mongols' policy on religious toleration.

On Pentecost day (31st May) Mangu Chan called me before him, and also the Tuin with whom I had discussed; but before I went in, the interpreter, master William's son, said to me that we should have to go back to our country, and that I must not raise any objection, for he understood that it was a settled matter. When I came before the Chan I had to bend the knees, and so did the Tuin beside me, with his interpreter. Then (the Chan) said to me: "Tell me the truth, whether you said the other day, when I sent my secretaries to you, that I was a Tuin." I replied: "My lord, I did not say that; I will tell you what I said, if it pleases you." Then I repeated to him what I had said, and he replied: "I thought full well that you did not say it, for you should not have said it; but your interpreter translated badly." And he held out toward me the staff on which he leaned, saying: "Fear not." And I, smiling, said in an undertone: "If I had been afraid, I should not have come here." He asked the interpreter what I had said, and he repeated it to him. After that he began confiding to me his creed: "We Mo'al," he said, "believe that there is only one God, by whom we live and by whom we die, and for whom we have an upright heart." Then I said: "May it be so, for without His grace this cannot be." He asked what I had said; the interpreter told him. Then he added: "But as God gives us the different fingers of the hand, so he gives to men divers ways [J: several paths]. God gives you the Scriptures, and you Christians keep them not. You do not find (in them, for example) that one should find fault with another [J: abuse another], do you?" "No, my lord," I said; "but I told you from the first that I did not want to wrangle with anyone." "I do not intend to say it," he said, "for you [J: I am not referring to you]. Likewise you do not find that a man should depart from justice for money." "No, my lord," I said. "And truly I came not to these parts to obtain money; on the contrary I have refused what has been offered me." And there was a secretary present, who bore witness that I refused an *iascot* and silken cloths. "I dare not say it," he said, "for you. God gave you therefore the Scriptures, and you do not keep them; He gave us diviners, we do what they tell us, and we live in peace."

Source: W. W. Rockhill, ed. and trans., *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55, as Narrated by Himself, with Two Accounts of the Earlier Journey of John of Pian de Carpine* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1900), 235–236.

24. BAR HEBRAEUS ON THE FALL OF BAGHDAD AND THE ABBASID CALIPHATE (1258)

Bar Hebraeus (1226–1286), a Syriac monk, lived during the period of Hulegu's (1217–1265) invasion. Although Bar Hebraeus was not present at the fall of Baghdad, his account concisely summarizes Caliph Musta'sim's (1213–1258) inability to mount an effective defense against the Mongols and the cause of the end of the Abbasid Caliphate after the siege and fall of Baghdad in February 1258.

After Mustanser, Musta'sen, his son [ruled] sixteen years. This man possessed a childish understanding, and was incapable of distinguishing good from bad; and he occupied all his time in playing with doves, and in amusing himself with games with birds. And when it was said unto him, “The Tatars are preparing to capture Baghdad, even as they have captured the famous cities in Persia and destroyed [them]” he replied, “This is our throne, and if we do not give them permission they cannot come in”. And thus God made an end of the kingdom of the ‘Abbasides in the days of this foolish man.

Source: Bar Hebraeus, *The Chronography of Gregory Abu'l Faraj*, translated by Ernest A. Wallis (Amsterdam: APA-Philo-Press, 1932), 409.

25. MARCO POLO'S ACCOUNT OF THE FALL OF BAGHDAD (1258)

Marco Polo (1254–1324) often related stories that would be of interest to Europe. The fall of Baghdad was one of these. His date is a bit off, for Baghdad, or Baudas as Polo called it, fell in 1258. Hulegu (1217–1265) is represented here as Alau, which would be a close approximation of how his name was pronounced in Middle Mongolian. Although it is more likely that the caliph was killed by being rolled up in a carpet and trampled by horses (to prevent blood from spilling into the earth), Polo's version of the caliph's death better fitted his audience's interests.

Now it came to pass on a day in the year of Christ 1255, that the Lord of the Tartars of the Levant, whose name was Alaü, brother to the Great Kaan now reigning, gathered a mighty host and came up against Baudas and took it by storm. It was a great enterprise! for in Baudas there were more than 100,000 horse, besides foot soldiers. And when Alaü had taken the place he found therein a tower of the Califs, which was full of gold and silver and other treasure; in fact the greatest accumulation of treasure in one spot that ever was known. When he beheld that great heap of treasure he was astonished, and, summoning the Calif to his presence, he said to him: “Calif, tell me now why thou hast gathered such a huge treasure? What didst thou mean to do therewith? Knewest

thou not that I was thine enemy, and that I was coming against thee with so great an host to cast thee forth of thine heritage? Wherefore didst thou not take of thy gear and employ it in paying knights and soldiers to defend thee and thy city?”

The Calif wist not what to answer, and said never a word. So the Prince continued, “Now then, Calif, since I see what a love thou hast borne thy treasure, I will e'en give it thee to eat!” So he shut the Calif up in the Treasure Tower, and bade that neither meat nor drink should be given him, saying, “Now, Calif, eat of thy treasure as much as thou wilt, since thou art so fond of it; for never shalt thou have aught else to eat!”

So the Calif lingered in the tower four days, and then died like a dog. Truly his treasure would have been of more service to him had he bestowed it upon men who would have defended his kingdom and his people, rather than let himself be taken and deposed and put to death as he was. Howbeit, since that time, there has been never another Calif, either at Baudas or anywhere else.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 1, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10636/pg10636-images.html>.

26. LETTER OF HULEGU TO KING LOUIS IX OF FRANCE (1262)

In 1262, Hulegu (1217–1265) sent a letter to King Louis IX (1214–1270) of France. Louis sought an alliance with the Mongols against the Mamluk Sultanate. At the time, however, the idea of an alliance was unacceptable to Hulegu, who would aid Louis only if he submitted to Mongol authority. In this passage, Hulegu explains why the Mongols were meant to rule thanks to a decree of Koke Mongke Tengri, the Eternal Blue Sky.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last daysspoken unto our grandfather [Chinggis] Khan by Teb Tengri (meaning prophet of God), his relative, miraculously revealing future events to him through the word of Teb Tengri, saying in effect: ‘I alone am the Almighty God on high and I have set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms to be king of all he world, to root out and to pull down and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant. I tell you to announce my command to all the nations, tongues and tribes of the east, the south, the north and the west, to promulgate it in all the regions of the whole world where emperors, kings, and sovereigns rule, where lordships operate, where horses can go, ships sail, envoys reach, letters be heard, so that they who have ears can hear, those who hear can understand and those who understand can believe. Those who do not believe will later learn what punishment will be meted on those who did not believe my commands.

Source: “Hulegu, Mongol Il-Khan of Persia, to Louis IX, King of France (1262),” in *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims and Settlers in the 12th–13th Centuries*, edited and translated by Malcolm Barber and Keith Bates (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 156–157.

27. MARCO POLO'S ACCOUNT OF THE SIEGE OF XIANGYANG (1273)

The city of Xiangyang fell to Khubilai Khan in 1273 after a siege of 10 years. The key was the arrival of Muslim engineers from the Il-Khanate who knew how to construct counter-weight trebuchets, which could launch heavier missiles. Marco Polo, however, took credit for it in his account even though he arrived in China roughly 10 years after Xiangyang fell. It is not clear why he did so, other than the fact that the siege had become the stuff of legend. Polo may have taken credit to establish his credentials with the audience of his book—showing why Khubilai Khan showed favor to Marco and his father and uncle.

You must know that when the Great Kaan's host had lain three years before the city without being able to take it, they were greatly chafed thereat. Then Messer Nicolo Polo and Messer Maffeo and Messer Marco said: "We could find you a way of forcing the city to surrender speedily;" whereupon those of the army replied, that they would be right glad to know how that should be. All this talk took place in the presence of the Great Kaan. For messengers had been despatched from the camp to tell him that there was no taking the city by blockade, for it continually received supplies of victual from those sides which they were unable to invest; and the Great Kaan had sent back word that take it they must, and find a way how. Then spoke up the two brothers and Messer Marco the son, and said: "Great Prince, we have with us among our followers men who are able to construct mangonels which shall cast such great stones that the garrison will never be able to stand them, but will surrender incontinently, as soon as the mangonels or trebuchets shall have shot into the town."

The Kaan bade them with all his heart have such mangonels made as speedily as possible. Now Messer Nicolo and his brother and his son immediately caused timber to be brought, as much as they desired, and fit for the work in hand. And they had two men among their followers, a German and a Nestorian Christian, who were masters of that business, and these they directed to construct two or three mangonels capable of casting stones of 300 lbs. weight. Accordingly they made three fine mangonels, each of which cast stones of 300 lbs. weight and more. And when they were complete and ready for use, the Emperor and the others were greatly pleased to see them, and caused several stones to be shot in their presence; whereat they marvelled greatly and greatly praised the work. And the Kaan ordered that the engines should be carried to his army which was at the leaguer of Saianfu.

And when the engines were got to the camp they were forthwith set up, to the great admiration of the Tartars. And what shall I tell you? When the engines were set up and put in gear, a stone was shot from each of them into the town. These took effect among the buildings, crashing and smashing through everything with huge din and commotion. And when the townspeople witnessed this new and strange visitation they were so astonished and dismayed that they wist not what to do or say. They took counsel together, but no counsel could be suggested how to escape from these engines, for the thing seemed to them to be done by sorcery. They declared that they were all dead men if they yielded not, so they determined to surrender on such conditions as they could

get. Wherefore they straightway sent word to the commander of the army that they were ready to surrender on the same terms as the other cities of the province had done, and to become the subjects of the Great Kaan; and to this the captain of the host consented.

So the men of the city surrendered, and were received to terms; and this all came about through the exertions of Messer Nicolo, and Messer Maffeo, and Messer Marco; and it was no small matter. For this city and province is one of the best that the Great Kaan possesses, and brings him in great revenues.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 2, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/12410/pg12410.html>.

28. RABBAN SAWMA'S ACCOUNT OF THE ELECTION OF YAHBA ALLAH III AS CATHOLICUS OF THE EASTERN CHURCH (1281)

While Marco Polo's (1254–1324) travel account receives a great deal of attention, the account of Rabban Sawma (ca. 1220–1294) deserves equal attention. The following excerpt tells how Rabban Sawma's disciple Markos (1245–1317) becomes the catholicus (patriarch) of the Church of the East. It reveals that Markos's identity as an Onggud played a key role in his selection because he would be more familiar with the Mongols than would a Christian Arab from Iraq. Also, notable in this selection is an almost throwaway description of the paiza or gerege passport of the Mongols, which allowed the patriarch safe passage through Mongol territory.

And on the following day the Fathers gathered together to elect a person suitable to sit on the [patriarchal] Throne. There were present the following: first and foremost there was MARAN-'AMMEH, Metropolitan of ELAM. Another was [the Metropolitan of] TANGOTH [in China]; another was [the Metropolitan of] TIRAHAN near Samarra in 'Irak; and another was [the Metropolitan of] TURE [i.e., TUR 'ABHDIN]. And with these were the nobles, and governors, and scribes, and lawyers, and physicians of BAGHDAD. And one said, "this man shall be Patriarch," and another said, "that man shall be Patriarch," until at length they all agreed that MAR YAHBH-ALLAHA should be the head and governor of the Throne of SELEUCIA and CTESIPHON. The reason for his election was this: The kings who held the steering poles of the government of the whole world were MUGLAYE (Mongols), and there was no man except MAR YAHBH-ALLAHA who was acquainted with their manners and customs, and their policy of government, and their language. And when [the nobles of Baghdad] said these things to him he made excuses and demurred to their statements, saying, "I am deficient in education and in ecclesiastical doctrine, and the member of my tongue halteth. How can I possibly become your Patriarch? And moreover, I am wholly ignorant of your language, Syriac, which it is absolutely necessary for the Patriarch to know." And having pressed upon him their quest, he agreed to their opinion and accepted [the

office]. And all the aged men, and priests, and nobles, and scribes, and also the physicians, gave their support to him.

Source: E. A. Wallis Budge, ed. and trans., *The History of the Life and Travels of Rabban Sawma* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1928), <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/sauma.html#ch5>.

29. MARCO POLO'S ACCOUNT OF NAYAN'S REBELLION AGAINST KHUBILAI KHAN (1287)

Nayan (d. 1287) attempted to rebel against Khubilai Khan (1215–1294) in 1287, but Khubilai learned of the uprising before Nayan could fully organize it. Khubilai personally led his army against Nayan, who was a descendant of Temuge, Chinggis Khan's (1164–1227) youngest brother. Khubilai Khan defeated Nayan and executed him. Because Nayan was a Nestorian Christian, he also had many Nestorian troops. When they were defeated, other religious groups sought to take the opportunity to gain favor at the expense of the Christians, which naturally aroused Marco Polo's (1254–1324) interest. The following passage reveals Khubilai's actions once he understood that the rebellion had no basis in religion but instead was a result of Nayan's ambition.

And after the Great Kaan had conquered Nayan, as you have heard, it came to pass that the different kinds of people who were present, Saracens and Idolaters and Jews, and many others that believed not in God, did gibe those that were Christians because of the cross that Nayan had borne on his standard, and that so grievously that there was no bearing it. Thus they would say to the Christians: "See now what precious help this God's Cross of yours hath rendered Nayan, who was a Christian and a worshipper thereof." And such a din arose about the matter that it reached the Great Kaan's own ears. When it did so, he sharply rebuked those who cast these gibes at the Christians; and he also bade the Christians be of good heart, "for if the Cross had rendered no help to Nayan, in that It had done right well; nor could that which was good, as It was, have done otherwise; for Nayan was a disloyal and traitorous Rebel against his Lord, and well deserved that which had befallen him. Wherefore the Cross of your God did well in that It gave him no help against the right." And this he said so loud that everybody heard him. The Christians then replied to the Great Kaan: "Great King, you say the truth indeed, for our Cross can render no one help in wrong-doing; and therefore it was that It aided not Nayan, who was guilty of crime and disloyalty, for It would take no part in his evil deeds."

And so thenceforward no more was heard of the floutings of the unbelievers against the Christians; for they heard very well what the Sovereign said to the latter about the Cross on Nayan's banner, and its giving him no help.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 1, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10636/pg10636-images.html>.

30. MARCO POLO ON THE WOMEN OF KHUBILAI KHAN'S COURT (ca. 1298)

With his father and uncle, Marco Polo set out on his adventures at the age of 17. He traveled from his native Venice across Central Asia to China, then ruled by Khubilai Khan, grandson of the Mongol conqueror Ghengis Khan. Years later while imprisoned in Genoa, Polo dictated this account of his travels. The author tells of wondrous new cities and ports. The selection here describes the roles of the women of Khubilai Khan's court.

[Khubilai] has four wives of the first rank, who are esteemed legitimate, and the eldest born son of any one of these succeeds to the empire, upon the decease of the grand khan. They bear equally the title of empress, and have their separate courts. None of them have fewer than three hundred young female attendants of great beauty, together with a multitude of youths as pages, and other eunuchs, as well as ladies of the bed-chamber; so that the number of persons belonging to each of their respective courts amounts to ten thousand. . . . Besides these, he has many concubines provided for his use, from a province of Tartary named Ungut, having a city of the same name, the inhabitants of which are distinguished for beauty and features and fairness of complexion. Thither the grand khan sends his officers every second year, or oftener, as it may happen to be his pleasure, who collect for him, to the number of four or five hundred, or more, of the handsomest of the young women, according to the estimation of beauty communicated to them in their instructions.

. . . Upon the arrival of these commissioners, they give orders for assembling all the young women of the province, and appoint qualified persons to examine them, who, upon careful inspection of each of them separately, that is to say, of the hair, the countenance, the eyebrows, the mouth, the lips, and other features, as well as the symmetry of these with each other, estimate their value at sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, or twenty, or more carats, according to the greater or less degree of beauty. The number required by the grand khan, at the rates, perhaps of twenty or twenty-one carats, to which their commission was limited, is then selected from the rest, and they are conveyed to his court.

Upon their arrival in his presence, he causes a new examination to be made by a different set of inspectors, and from amongst them a further selection takes place, when thirty or forty are retained for his own chamber at a higher valuation. These, in the first instance, are committed separately to the care of the wives of certain of the nobles, whose duty it is to observe them attentively during the course of the night, in order to ascertain that they have not any concealed imperfections, that they sleep tranquilly, do not snore, have sweet breath, and are free from unpleasant scent in any part of the body. Having undergone this rigorous scrutiny, they're divided into parties of five, one of which parties attends during three days and three nights, in his majesty's interior apartment, where they are to perform every service that is required of them, and he does with them as he likes. When this term is completed, they are relieved by another party, and in this manner successively, until the whole number have taken their turn; when the first five recommence their attendance. But whilst the one party officiates in

the inner chamber, another is stationed in the outer apartment adjoining; in order that if his majesty should have occasion for anything, such as drink or victuals, the former may signify his commands to the latter, by whom the article required is immediately procured: and thus the duty of waiting upon his majesty's person is exclusively performed by these young females.

The remainder of them, whose value had been estimated at an inferior rate, are assigned to the different lords of the household; under whom they are instructed in cookery, in dressmaking, and other suitable works; and upon any person belonging to the court expressing an inclination to take a wife, the grand khan bestows upon him one of these damsels, with a handsome portion. In this manner he provides for them all amongst his nobility. It may be asked whether the people of the province do not feel themselves aggrieved in having their daughters thus forcibly taken from them by the sovereign? . . . [T]hey regard it as a favour and an honour done to them; and those who are the fathers of handsome children feel highly gratified by his condescending to make choice of their daughters. "If," say they, "my daughter is born under an auspicious planet and to good fortune, his majesty can best fulfill her destinies, by matching her nobly; which it would not be in my power to do." If, on the other hand, the daughter misconducts herself, or any mischance befalls her (by which she becomes disqualified), the father attributes the disappointment to the malign influence of her stars.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo the Venetian*, edited by E. Rhys, translated by J. Masefield (New York: Dent, 1908), 164–165.

31. MARCO POLO'S DESCRIPTION OF CHINA'S COUNTRYSIDE (1298)

In describing his travels through Asia, Venetian traveler Marco Polo (1254–1324) is generally not attentive to the countryside. However, in the passages below about his journeys through China, he does include a few mentions of its farms.

So, quitting this province and city of Linju, you travel three days more towards the south, constantly finding numbers of rich towns and villages. These still belong to Cathay; and the people are all Idolaters, burning their dead, and using paper-money, that I mean of their Lord the Great Kaan, whose subjects they are. This is the finest country for game, whether in beasts or birds, that is anywhere to be found, and all the necessaries of life are in profusion. . . .

When you leave Piju you travel towards the south for two days, through beautiful districts abounding in everything, and in which you find quantities of all kinds of game. At the end of those two days you reach the city of Siju, a great, rich, and noble city, flourishing with trade and manufactures. The people are Idolaters, burn their dead, use paper-money, and are subjects of the Great Kaan. They possess extensive and fertile plains producing abundance of wheat and other grain. But there is nothing else to mention, so let us proceed and tell you of the countries further on.

On leaving Siju you ride south for three days, constantly falling in with fine towns and villages and hamlets and farms, with their cultivated lands. There is plenty of wheat and other corn, and of game also; and the people are all Idolaters and subjects of the Great Kaan. . . .

When you leave Cayu, you ride another day to the south-east through a constant succession of villages and fields and fine farms until you come to Tiju, which is a city of no great size but abounding in everything. . . .

Source: Marco Polo, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East*, translated by Henry Yule (London: John Murray, 1871), 102–116.

32. MARCO POLO ON KHUBILAI KHAN'S PALACE (1298)

In the below passages, the famed Venetian traveler Marco Polo (1254–1324) describes the magnificent palace of Mongol emperor Khubilai Khan (1215–1294).

In that city [Cambaluc] stands his great Palace, and now I will tell you what it is like. It is enclosed all round by a great wall forming a square, each side of which is a mile in length; that is to say, the whole compass thereof is four miles. This you may depend on; it is also very thick, and a good ten paces in height, whitewashed and loop-holed all round. . . .

[The Palace] hath no upper story, but is all on the ground floor, only the basement is raised some ten palms above the surrounding soil [and this elevation is retained by a wall of marble raised to the level of the pavement, two paces in width and projecting beyond the base of the Palace so as to form a kind of terrace-walk, by which people can pass round the building, and which is exposed to view, whilst on the outer edge of the wall there is a very fine pillared balustrade; and up to this the people are allowed to come.] The roof is very lofty, and the walls of the Palace are all covered with gold and silver. They are also adorned with representations of dragons, beasts and birds, knights and idols, and sundry other subjects.

And on the ceiling too you see nothing but gold and silver and painting. [On each of the four sides there is a great marble staircase leading to the top of the marble wall, and forming the approach to the Palace.] The Hall of the Palace is so large that it could easily dine 6,000 people; and it is quite a marvel to see how many rooms there are besides. The building is altogether so vast, so rich, and so beautiful, that no man on earth could design anything superior to it. The outside of the roof also is all coloured with vermilion and yellow and green and blue and other hues, which are fixed with a varnish so fine and exquisite that they shine like crystal, and lend a resplendent lustre to the Palace as seen for a great way round. This roof is made too with such strength and solidity that it is fit to last for ever.

On the interior side of the Palace are large buildings with halls and chambers, where the Emperor's private property is placed, such as his treasures of gold, silver, gems,

pearls, and gold plate, and in which reside the ladies and concubines. There he occupies himself at his own convenience, and no one else has access.

Between the two walls of the enclosure which I have described, there are fine parks and beautiful trees bearing a variety of fruits. There are beasts also of sundry kinds, such as white stags and fallow deer, gazelles and roebucks, and fine squirrels of various sorts, with numbers also of the animal that gives the musk, and all manner of other beautiful creatures. . . .

Moreover on the north side of the Palace, about a bow-shot off, there is a hill which has been made by art [from the earth dug out of the lake]; it is a good hundred paces in height and a mile in compass. This hill is entirely covered with trees that never lose their leaves, but remain ever green. And I assure you that wherever a beautiful tree may exist, and the Emperor gets news of it, he sends for it and has it transported bodily with all its roots and the earth attached to them, and planted on that hill of his. No matter how big the tree may be, he gets it carried by his elephants; and in this way he has got together the most beautiful collection of trees in all the world.

And he has also caused the whole hill to be covered with the ore of azure, which is very green. And thus not only are the trees all green, but the hill itself is all green likewise; and there is nothing to be seen on it that is not green; and hence it is called the Green Mount; and in good sooth 'tis named well.

You must know that beside the Palace (that we have been describing), i.e. the Great Palace, the Emperor has caused another to be built just like his own in every respect, and this he hath done for his son when he shall reign and be Emperor after him. Hence it is made just in the same fashion and of the same size, so that everything can be carried on in the same manner after his own death. . . .

Source: Marco Polo, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, the Venetian, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East*, translated by Henry Yule (London: John Murray, 1871), 324–327.

33. MARCO POLO ON PAPER MONEY IN CHINA (ca. 1300)

Paper money circulated much earlier in the Far East than in Europe; China used paper money as early as the 9th century, whereas paper money did not come into wide circulation in Europe until the 17th century. As his description makes clear, the concept of paper money amazed the Italian Marco Polo. Europe, with its system of metal coins, was still using a commodity currency, in which the form of currency (precious metals in this case) was useful and therefore valuable; gold coins could be made into gold rings, for example. Paper money is a credit currency in which the value of the currency derives not from its intrinsic usefulness but rather solely from the fact that the government and the people have assigned it an arbitrary value. Marco Polo's narrative, from Book 2, Chapter 24, of The Travels of Marco Polo (also called The Book of Marvels), highlights the necessary ingredients for a strong credit currency: strong government control and the acceptance of the populace.

How the Great Khan Causeth the Bark of Trees, Made Into Something Like Paper, to Pass for Money Over All his Country

Now that I have told you in detail of the splendor of this city of the Emperor's [Khubilai Khan], I shall proceed to tell you of the mint which he hath in the same city, in the which he hath his money coined and struck, as I shall relate to you. And in doing so I shall make manifest to you how it is that the Great Lord may well be able to accomplish even much more than I have told you, or am going to tell you, in this Book. For, tell it how I might, you never would be satisfied that I was keeping within truth and reason!

The Emperor's mint then is in this same city of Cambaluc, and the way it is wrought is such that you might say he hath the secret of alchemy in perfection, and you would be right! For he makes his money after this fashion.

He makes them take of the bark of a certain tree, in fact of the mulberry tree, the leaves of which are the food of the silkworms—these trees being so numerous that whole districts are full of them. What they take is a certain fine white skin which lies between the wood of the tree and the thick outer bark, and this they make into something resembling sheets of paper, but black. When these sheets have been prepared they are cut up into pieces of different sizes. The smallest of these sizes is worth a half tornesel; the next, a little larger, one tornesel; one, a little larger still, is worth half a silver groat of Venice; another a whole groat; others yet two groats, five groats, and ten groats. There is also a kind worth one bezant of gold, and others of three bezants, and so up to ten. All these pieces of paper are issued with as much solemnity and authority as if they were of pure gold or silver; and on every piece a variety of officials, whose duty it is, have to write their names, and to put their seals. And when all is prepared duly, the chief officer deputed by the Khan smears the seal entrusted to him with vermilion, and impresses it on the paper, so that the form of the seal remains printed upon it in red; the money is then authentic. Anyone forging it would be punished with death. And the Khan causes every year to be made such a vast quantity of this money, which costs him nothing, that it must equal in amount all the treasure in the world.

With these pieces of paper, made as I have described, he causes all payments on his own account to be made; and he makes them to pass current universally over all his kingdoms and provinces and territories, and whithersoever his power and sovereignty extends. And nobody, however important he may think himself, dares to refuse them on pain of death. And indeed everybody takes them readily, for wheresoever a person may go throughout the Great Khan's dominions he shall find these pieces of paper current, and shall be able to transact all sales and purchases of goods by means of them just as well as if they were coins of pure gold. And all the while they are so light that ten bezants' worth does not weigh one golden bezant.

Furthermore all merchants arriving from India or other countries, and bringing with them gold or silver or gems and pearls, are prohibited from selling to any one but the Emperor. He has twelve experts chosen for this business, men of shrewdness and experience in such affairs; these appraise the articles, and the Emperor then pays a liberal price for them in those pieces of paper. The merchants accept his price readily, for

in the first place they would not get so good a one from anybody else, and secondly they are paid without any delay. And with this paper-money they can buy what they like anywhere over the Empire, whilst it is also vastly lighter to carry about on their journeys. And it is a truth that the merchants will several times in the year bring wares to the amount of 400,000 bezants, and the Grand Sire pays for all in that paper. So he buys such a quantity of those precious things every year that his treasure is endless, whilst all the time the money he pays away costs him nothing at all. Moreover, several times in the year proclamation is made through the city that any one who may have gold or silver or gems or pearls, by taking them to the mint shall get a handsome price for them. And the owners are glad to do this, because they would find no other purchaser give so large a price. Thus the quantity they bring in is marvellous, though those who do not choose to do so may let it alone. Still, in this way, nearly all the valuables in the country come into the Khan's possession.

When any of those pieces of paper are spoilt—not that they are so very flimsy neither—the owner carries them to the mint, and by paying three per cent on the value, he gets new pieces in exchange. And if any baron, or any one else soever, hath need of gold or silver or gems or pearls, in order to make plate, or girdles, or the like, he goes to the mint and buys as much as he list, paying in this paper-money.

Now you have heard the ways and means whereby the Great Khan may have, and in fact has, more treasure than all the Kings in the World; and you know all about it and the reason why.

Source: Marco Polo and Rustichello of Pisa, *The Travels of Marco Polo: The Complete Yule-Cordier Edition*, 2nd ed., edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier (New York: Scribner, 1903), 423–426.

34. MARCO POLO ON MONGOL WARRIORS IN THE 13TH CENTURY (ca. 1300)

Although other adventurers had reached China before Marco Polo, his literary account of his voyages became the first widely read work about Oriental peoples and cultures. The Mongols, or the Tartars as they are called in the following extract, were famous warriors who possessed a kingdom stretching from Eastern Europe to China. According to his account, Marco Polo visited and befriended the great khan, the ruler of the Mongol Empire. Although Marco Polo embellished many of his accounts with fictional details or myths that he had heard from other travelers, his description of Mongol warriors appears to be accurate because it matches the descriptions found in many other sources.

Like European knights, the Mongol warriors excelled in horsemanship; unlike the Europeans, however, who weighed themselves down with heavy armor, the Mongols prized speed and tactics over heavy armor and weapons. As a result, Mongol armies, armed with bows and light leather armor, frequently outmaneuvered European armies, striking at the weakest defenses and retreating before any counterattack could arrive. Tensions within the Mongol Empire, rather than military defeat, kept the Mongols from creating an empire that included all of Europe and Asia.

Concerning the Tartar [Mongol] Customs of War

All their harness of war is excellent and costly. Their arms are bows and arrows, sword and mace; but above all the bow, for they are capital archers, indeed the best that are known. On their backs they wear armor of cuirboully, prepared from buffalo and other hides, which is very strong. They are excellent soldiers, and passing valiant in battle. They are also more capable of hardships than other nations; for many a time, if need be, they will go for a month without any supply of food, living only on the milk of their mares and on such game as their bows may win them. Their horses also will subsist entirely on the grass of the plains, so that there is no need to carry store of barley or straw or oats; and they are very docile to their riders. These, in case of need, will abide on horseback the livelong night, armed at all points, while the horse will be continually grazing.

Of all troops in the world these are they which endure the greatest hardship and fatigue, and which cost the least; and they are the best of all for making wide conquests of country. And this you will perceive from what you have heard and shall hear in this book; and (as a fact) there can be no manner of doubt that now they are the masters of the biggest half of the world. Their troops are admirably ordered in the manner that I shall now relate.

You see, when a Tartar prince goes forth to war, he takes with him, say, 100,000 horse. Well, he appoints an officer to every ten men, one to every hundred, one to every thousand, and one to every ten thousand, so that his own orders have to be given to ten persons only, and each of these ten persons has to pass the orders only to another ten, and so on; no one having to give orders to more than ten. And every one in turn is responsible only to the officer immediately over him; and the discipline and order that comes of this method is marvellous, for they are a people very obedient to their chiefs. Further, they call the corps of 100,000 men a Tuc; that of 10,000 they call a Toman; the hundred Guz. And when the army is on the march they have always 200 horsemen, very well mounted, who are sent a distance of two marches in advance to reconnoitre, and these always keep ahead. They have a similar party detached in the rear, and on either flank, so that there is a good look-out kept on all sides against a surprise. When they are going on a distant expedition they take no gear with them except two leather bottles for milk; a little earthenware pot to cook their meat in; and a little tent to shelter them from rain. And in case of great urgency they will ride ten days on end without lighting a fire or taking a meal. On such an occasion they will sustain themselves on the blood of their horses, opening a vein and letting the blood jet into their mouths, drinking till they have had enough, and then staunching it.

They also have milk dried into a kind of paste to carry with them; and when they need food they put this in water, and beat it up till it dissolves, and then drink it. It is prepared in this way; they boil the milk, and when the rich part floats on the top they skim it into another vessel, and of that they make butter; for the milk will not become solid till this is removed. Then they put the milk in the sun to dry. And when they go on an expedition, every man takes some ten pounds of this dried milk with him. And of a morning he will take a half pound of it and put it in his leather bottle, with as much

water as he pleases. So, as he rides along, the milk-paste and the water in the bottle get well churned together into a kind of pap, and that makes his dinner.

When they come to an engagement with the enemy, they will gain the victory in this fashion. They never let themselves get into a regular medley, but keep perpetually riding round and shooting into the enemy. And as they do not count it any shame to run away in battle, they will sometimes pretend to do so, and in running away they turn in the saddle and shoot hard and strong at the foe, and in this way make great havoc. Their horses are trained so perfectly that they will double hither and thither, just like a dog, in a way that is quite astonishing. Thus they fight to as good purpose in running away as if they stood and faced the enemy, because of the vast volleys of arrows that they shoot in this way, turning round upon their pursuers, who are fancying that they have won the battle. But when the Tartars see that they have killed and wounded a good many horses and men, they wheel round bodily, and return to the charge in perfect order and with loud cries; and in a very short time the enemy are routed. In truth they are stout and valiant soldiers, and inured to war. And you perceive that it is just when the enemy sees them run, and imagines that he has gained the battle, that he has in reality lost it; for the Tartars wheel round in a moment when they judge the right time has come. And after this fashion they have won many a fight.

All this that I have been telling you is true of the manners and customs of the genuine Tartars. But I must add also that in these days they are greatly degenerated; for those who are settled in China have taken up the practices of the idolaters of the country, and have abandoned their own institutions; whilst those who have settled in the Middle East have adopted the customs of the Saracens.

Source: Marco Polo and Rustichello of Pisa, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo the Venetian Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East*, Vol. 1, edited by Henry Yule (London: John Murray, 1903), 260–263.

35. MARCO POLO'S DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY OF DAIDU (ca. 1300)

The Italian merchant Marco Polo (1254–1324) published a narrative of his travels in the Mongol lands in about 1300; Polo's work is best known in English under the title The Travels of Marco Polo. Polo's account of the city of Daidu is very detailed, especially as regards its layout. The following section discusses how the city was planned and created. In this translation done in 1903, translator Henry Yule used Cambaluc for Khanbaligh and Taidu for Daidu.

Now there was on that spot in old times a great and noble city called CAMBALUC, which is as much as to say in our tongue “The city of the Emperor.” But the Great Kaan was informed by his Astrologers that this city would prove rebellious, and raise great disorders against his imperial authority. So he caused the present city to be built close beside the old one, with only a river between them. And he caused the people of the

old city to be removed to the new town that he had founded; and this is called TAIDU. [However, he allowed a portion of the people which he did not suspect to remain in the old city, because the new one could not hold the whole of them, big as it is.]

As regards the size of this (new) city you must know that it has a compass of 24 miles, for each side of it hath a length of 6 miles, and it is four-square. And it is all walled round with walls of earth which have a thickness of full ten paces at bottom, and a height of more than 10 paces; but they are not so thick at top, for they diminish in thickness as they rise, so that at top they are only about 3 paces thick. And they are provided throughout with loop-holed battlements, which are all whitewashed.

There are 12 gates, and over each gate there is a great and handsome palace, so that there are on each side of the square three gates and five palaces; for (I ought to mention) there is at each angle also a great and handsome palace. In those palaces are vast halls in which are kept the arms of the city garrison.

The streets are so straight and wide that you can see right along them from end to end and from one gate to the other. And up and down the city there are beautiful palaces, and many great and fine hostelries, and fine houses in great numbers. All the plots of ground on which the houses of the city are built are four-square, and laid out with straight lines; all the plots being occupied by great and spacious palaces, with courts and gardens of proportionate size. All these plots were assigned to different heads of families. Each square plot is encompassed by handsome streets for traffic; and thus the whole city is arranged in squares just like a chess-board, and disposed in a manner so perfect and masterly that it is impossible to give a description that should do it justice.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 1, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10636/pg10636-images.html>.

36. MARCO POLO'S DESCRIPTION OF KHUBILAI KHAN HUNTING (ca. 1300)

The following passage from The Travels of Marco Polo tells how Khubilai went hunting. What is notable is that he did not ride a horse. In his later years, Khubilai was quite obese and also suffered from gout. Instead of riding a horse, he had a special chamber built that was carried somehow on four elephants. This chamber allowed him not only to travel but to be accompanied by his courtiers.

The Emperor himself is carried upon four elephants in a fine chamber made of timber, lined inside with plates of beaten gold, and outside with lions' skins [for he always travels in this way on his fowling expeditions, because he is troubled with gout]. He always keeps beside him a dozen of his choicest gerfalcons, and is attended by several of his Barons, who ride on horseback alongside. And sometimes, as they may be going along, and the Emperor from his chamber is holding discourse with the Barons, one of the latter shall exclaim: "Sire! Look out for Cranes!" Then the Emperor instantly has the top of

his chamber thrown open, and having marked the cranes he casts one of his gerfalcons, whichever he pleases; and often the quarry is struck within his view, so that he has the most exquisite sport and diversion, there as he sits in his chamber or lies on his bed; and all the Barons with him get the enjoyment of it likewise! So it is not without reason I tell you that I do not believe there ever existed in the world or ever will exist, a man with such sport and enjoyment as he has, or with such rare opportunities.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 1, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10636/pg10636-images.html>.

37. MARCO POLO'S DESCRIPTION OF CHINESE SHIPS (ca. 1300)

Many who heard or read doubted that Marco Polo ever reached China. This unbelief was true in his age as well as even into the 20th century. Scholars now have little doubt that he did indeed reach China. One of the reasons for this is that, increasingly, evidence has come to light to verify what he recorded. One such example concerns medieval Chinese ships. Recently, archaeologists have discovered ships from the Yuan era that were constructed in exactly the manner described below by Marco Polo.

These ships, you must know, are of fir timber. They have but one deck, though each of them contains some 50 or 60 cabins, wherein the merchants abide greatly at their ease, every man having one to himself. The ship hath but one rudder, but it hath four masts; and sometimes they have two additional masts, which they ship and unship at pleasure.

[Moreover the larger of their vessels have some thirteen compartments or severances in the interior, made with planking strongly framed, in case mayhap the ship should spring a leak, either by running on a rock or by the blow of a hungry whale (as shall betide oftentimes, for when the ship in her course by night sends a ripple back alongside of the whale, the creature seeing the foam fancies there is something to eat afloat, and makes a rush forward, whereby it often shall stave in some part of the ship). In such case the water that enters the leak flows to the bilge, which is always kept clear; and the mariners having ascertained where the damage is, empty the cargo from that compartment into those adjoining, for the planking is so well fitted that the water cannot pass from one compartment to another. They then stop the leak and replace the lading.]

The fastenings are all of good iron nails and the sides are double, one plank laid over the other, and caulked outside and in. The planks are not pitched, for those people do not have any pitch, but they daub the sides with another matter, deemed by them far better than pitch; it is this. You see they take some lime and some chopped hemp, and these they knead together with a certain wood-oil; and when the three are thoroughly amalgamated, they hold like any glue. And with this mixture they do paint their ships.

Each of their great ships requires at least 200 mariners [some of them 300]. They are indeed of great size, for one ship shall carry 5000 or 6000 baskets of pepper [and they used formerly to be larger than they are now]. And aboard these ships, you must know,

when there is no wind they use sweeps, and these sweeps are so big that to pull them requires four mariners to each. Every great ship has certain large barks or tenders attached to it; these are large enough to carry 1000 baskets of pepper, and carry 50 or 60 mariners apiece [some of them 80 or 100], and they are likewise moved by oars; they assist the great ship by towing her, at such times as her sweeps are in use [or even when she is under sail, if the wind be somewhat on the beam; not if the wind be astern, for then the sails of the big ship would take the wind out of those of the tenders, and she would run them down]. Each ship has two [or three] of these barks, but one is bigger than the others. There are also some ten [small] boats for the service of each great ship, to lay out the anchors, catch fish, bring supplies aboard, and the like. When the ship is under sail she carries these boats slung to her sides. And the large tenders have their boats in like manner.

When the ship has been a year in work and they wish to repair her, they nail on a third plank over the first two, and caulk and pay it well; and when another repair is wanted they nail on yet another plank, and so on year by year as it is required. Howbeit, they do this only for a certain number of years, and till there are six thicknesses of planking. When a ship has come to have six planks on her sides, one over the other, they take her no more on the high seas, but make use of her for coasting as long as she will last, and then they break her up.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 2, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/12410/pg12410.html>.

38. MARCO POLO'S DESCRIPTION OF MONGOL SHAMANISM (ca. 1300)

In this selection from Marco Polo's (1254–1324) travel account, he briefly summarizes the shamanistic beliefs and practices of the Mongols. During the time that Marco served in the Yuan Empire, the Mongols increasingly converted to Buddhism and Islam, but shamanism endured, particularly in the steppes. In this passage, he mentions Natigay, whom most scholars identify as the earth goddess, Etugen. Marco also refers to the onggons, or felt idols, and how offerings were made to them.

This is the fashion of their religion. [They say there is a Most High God of Heaven, whom they worship daily with thurible and incense, but they pray to Him only for health of mind and body. But] they have [also] a certain [other] god of theirs called NATIGAY, and they say he is the god of the Earth, who watches over their children, cattle, and crops. They show him great worship and honour, and every man hath a figure of him in his house, made of felt and cloth; and they also make in the same manner images of his wife and children. The wife they put on the left hand, and the children in front. And when they eat, they take the fat of the meat and grease the god's mouth withal, as well as the mouths of his wife and children. Then they take of the broth and sprinkle it before the door of the house; and that done, they deem that their god and his family have had their share of the dinner.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 1, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10636/pg10636-images.html>.

39. MARCO POLO'S ACCOUNT OF KHUBILAI KHAN'S HUNTING PARK AT SHANGDU (ca. 1300)

While Daidu served as the primary capital, Shangdu became a second capital and a sort of vacation home for the Yuan dynasty. At Shangdu, Khubilai Khan (1215–1294) kept a magnificent park for hunting and leisure, which became the inspiration for Samuel Taylor Coleridge's 1797 poem "Kubla Khan," with its "stately pleasure dome" in Xanadu. In the following passage, Marco Polo (1254–1324) discusses the park.

Round this Palace a wall is built, inclosing a compass of 16 miles, and inside the Park there are fountains and rivers and brooks, and beautiful meadows, with all kinds of wild animals (excluding such as are of ferocious nature), which the Emperor has procured and placed there to supply food for his gerfalcons and hawks, which he keeps there in mew. Of these there are more than 200 gerfalcons alone, without reckoning the other hawks. The Kaan himself goes every week to see his birds sitting in mew, and sometimes he rides through the park with a leopard behind him on his horse's croup; and then if he sees any animal that takes his fancy, he slips his leopard at it, and the game when taken is made over to feed the hawks in mew. This he does for diversion.

Moreover [at a spot in the Park where there is a charming wood] he has another Palace built of cane, of which I must give you a description. It is gilt all over, and most elaborately finished inside. [It is stayed on gilt and lackered columns, on each of which is a dragon all gilt, the tail of which is attached to the column whilst the head supports the architrave, and the claws likewise are stretched out right and left to support the architrave.] The roof, like the rest, is formed of canes, covered with a varnish so strong and excellent that no amount of rain will rot them. These canes are a good 3 palms in girth, and from 10 to 15 paces in length. [They are cut across at each knot, and then the pieces are split so as to form from each two hollow tiles, and with these the house is roofed; only every such tile of cane has to be nailed down to prevent the wind from lifting it.] In short, the whole Palace is built of these canes, which (I may mention) serve also for a great variety of other useful purposes. The construction of the Palace is so devised that it can be taken down and put up again with great celerity; and it can all be taken to pieces and removed whithersoever the Emperor may command. When erected, it is braced [against mishaps from the wind] by more than 200 cords of silk.

The Lord abides at this Park of his, dwelling sometimes in the Marble Palace and sometimes in the Cane Palace for three months of the year, to wit, June, July, and August; preferring this residence because it is by no means hot; in fact it is a very cool place. When the 28th day of [the Moon of] August arrives he takes his departure, and the Cane Palace is taken to pieces.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 1, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10636/pg10636-images.html>.

40. MARCO POLO'S ACCOUNT OF THE ASSASSINS (ca. 1300)

Marco Polo's (1254–1324) The Travels included events not only in his lifetime but also events that preceded his travels but would have interested his audience. One such account is his description of the infamous assassins. Compare account with that of the Chinese traveler, Ch'ang Te. Marco Polo is discussing the leader of the Assassins, the Old Man of the Mountains, as Westerners referred to him. 'Ala al-Din was the name of the founder of the Assassin order. Mulehet is Polo's version of Mullahid, a term for "heretic," while Ash-ishin is a corruption of Hashashiin, meaning one who eats "hash," or marijuana, and from whence we get our term "Assassin."

Mulehet is a country in which the Old Man of the Mountain dwelt in former days; and the name means "*Place of the Aram.*" I will tell you his whole history as related by Messer Marco Polo, who heard it from several natives of that region.

The Old Man was called in their language ALOADIN. He had caused a certain valley between two mountains to be enclosed, and had turned it into a garden, the largest and most beautiful that ever was seen, filled with every variety of fruit. In it were erected pavilions and palaces the most elegant that can be imagined, all covered with gilding and exquisite painting. And there were runnels too, flowing freely with wine and milk and honey and water; and numbers of ladies and of the most beautiful damsels in the world, who could play on all manner of instruments, and sung most sweetly, and danced in a manner that it was charming to behold. For the Old Man desired to make his people believe that this was actually Paradise. So he had fashioned it after the description that Mahommet gave of his Paradise, to wit, that it should be a beautiful garden running with conduits of wine and milk and honey and water, and full of lovely women for the delectation of all its inmates. And sure enough the Saracens of those parts believed that it *was* Paradise!

Now no man was allowed to enter the Garden save those whom he intended to be his ASHISHIN. There was a Fortress at the entrance to the Garden, strong enough to resist all the world, and there was no other way to get in. He kept at his Court a number of the youths of the country, from 12 to 20 years of age, such as had a taste for soldiering, and to these he used to tell tales about Paradise, just as Mahommet had been wont to do, and they believed in him just as the Saracens believe in Mahommet. Then he would introduce them into his garden, some four, or six, or ten at a time, having first made them drink a certain potion which cast them into a deep sleep, and then causing them to be lifted and carried in. So when they awoke, they found themselves in the Garden.

When therefore they awoke, and found themselves in a place so charming, they deemed that it was Paradise in very truth. And the ladies and damsels dallied with

them to their hearts' content, so that they had what young men would have; and with their own good will they never would have quitted the place.

Now this Prince whom we call the Old One kept his Court in grand and noble style, and made those simple hill-folks about him believe firmly that he was a great Prophet. And when he wanted one of his *Ashishin* to send on any mission, he would cause that potion whereof I spoke to be given to one of the youths in the garden, and then had him carried into his Palace. So when the young man awoke, he found himself in the Castle, and no longer in that Paradise; whereat he was not over well pleased. He was then conducted to the Old Man's presence, and bowed before him with great veneration as believing himself to be in the presence of a true Prophet. The Prince would then ask whence he came, and he would reply that he came from Paradise! and that it was exactly such as Mahomet had described it in the Law. This of course gave the others who stood by, and who had not been admitted, the greatest desire to enter therein.

So when the Old Man would have any Prince slain, he would say to such a youth: "Go thou and slay So and So; and when thou returnest my Angels shall bear thee into Paradise. And shouldst thou die, nathless even so will I send my Angels to carry thee back into Paradise." So he caused them to believe; and thus there was no order of his that they would not affront any peril to execute, for the great desire they had to get back into that Paradise of his. And in this manner the Old One got his people to murder any one whom he desired to get rid of. Thus, too, the great dread that he inspired all Princes withal, made them become his tributaries in order that he might abide at peace and amity with them.

Source: Marco Polo, *The Travels of Marco Polo*, Vol. 1, translated and edited by Henry Yule and Henri Cordier, Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10636/pg10636-images.html>.

41. AN ARMENIAN ACCOUNT OF THE MONGOLS' DIVINE RIGHT TO RULE (EARLY 14TH CENTURY)

Although it is unlikely that Chinggis Khan (1164–1227) sought to rule the world or even believed he was destined for it, after his death the Mongols certainly believed it. Other peoples soon were convinced that Mongol conquest was part of a divine plan, with the Mongols sent as a punishment for their sins. As the Mongol Empire expanded, the myth explaining that heaven had decreed that the Mongols should rule the world transmuted into a variety of forms, all in an attempt by conquered peoples to rationalize what had happened to them. What follows is an Armenian variant of the story recorded by Grigor of Akanc (d. ca. 1335), wherein an angel brought them news.

An angel appeared to them by the command of God in the guise of an eagle with golden feathers, and spoke in their own speech and tongue to their chief, who was named [Chinggis]. The latter went and stood before the angel in the guise of an eagle, at a distance—the length of a bow shot. Then the eagle told them the commandments of God.

These are the precepts of God which he imposed on them, and which they themselves call yasax. The first is [this]: that ye love one another; second, do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not bear false witness; do not betray anyone. Respect the aged and poor. If a transgressor of such be found among them, the lawbreakers are to be put to death. . . .

Thus this wild [and bestial] folk not only once brought the cup, but also the dregs of bitterness upon us, because of our many and varied sins, which continually roused the anger of the Creator our God at our deeds. Wherefore the Lord roused then in his anger as a lesson to us, because we had not kept his commandments.

Source: R. P. Blake and R. N. Frye, eds. and trans., “The History of the Nation of the Archers by Grigor of Akanc,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 12 (1949): 290–291.

42. PASSAGE FROM JAMI’U’T-TAWARIKH (COMPENDIUM OF CHRONICLES) IN WHICH CHINGGIS KHAN EXPLAINS THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE (EARLY 14TH CENTURY)

One day, Chinggis Khan (1164–1227) asked his companions Boorchu, Boroghul, and Doladai Qubilai what was best in life. Boorchu responded that hunting with falcons and riding fine horses while wearing nice clothes was best. Boroghul and Doladai Qubilai also said that hunting with falcons was best in life. Chinggis Khan disagreed, and his response reveals much of his personality.

You have all spoken well, but a man’s greatest pleasure is to defeat his enemies, to uproot them, to take what they have, to make their women weep so that tears run down their noses, to mount their fair-gaited, fat-thighed stallions, and to clothe the bellies and navels of beautiful women with thin nightclothes and to look at and kiss their rouged cheeks, and to suck their sweet, ruby-colored lips.

Source: Rashiduddin Fazlullah, *Jami’u’t-Tawarikh: Compendium of Chronicles*, Vol. 3, translated by Wheeler M. Thackston (London: I. B. Tauris, 2012), 206.

43. LETTER FROM GHAZAN, RULER OF THE IL-KHANATE, TO POPE BONIFACE VIII (APRIL 1302)

Ghazan (1271–1304) was the ruler of the Mongol Il-Khanate, which was centered in modern-day Iran. Although he made Islam the state religion of the Il-Khanate, this move did not alleviate any tension between the Il-Khanate and the Mamluk Sultanate to the west. As a result, Ghazan was open to an alliance with the papacy or any Christian ruler who wanted to attack the Mamluks. Also, after the last crusader city fell to the Mamluks in 1291, it became very unlikely that a crusader army would be able to regain Jerusalem without Mongol help because the crusaders needed either to secure a beachhead or to

travel through Mongol territory. Reproduced below is a letter from Ghazan to Pope Boniface VIII (r. 1294–1303).

The suggestions, kind words and letter brought from you by Bisqarun have arrived, and in response we have dispatched three people, my son-in-law Kokedei, Bisqarun and Tumen with an order. Meanwhile we are continuing preparations as stated in the letter. You too should prepare your troops, inform the sultans of the various regions and arrive on the agreed date. If the heavens hear our prayers our entire effort will be directed to their great enterprise. Furthermore, we have dispatched Sadadin, Sinanadin and Samsadin. You, too, should pray to the heavens and prepare your troops. Our letter was written in the year 701, year of the tiger, on the fourteenth day of the last month of spring at Qos Qabuy.

Source: “Ghazan, Mongol Il-Khan of Persia, to Pope Boniface VIII (April, 1302),” in *Letters from the East: Crusaders, Pilgrims and Settlers in the 12th–13th Centuries*, edited and translated by Barber Malcolm and Keith Bates (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 168–169.

44. RABBAN SAWMA’S ACCOUNT OF THE MEETING OF OLJEITU AND MARYAHBA ALLAH (1304)

Many Mongols converted to Islam in the late 13th century. Although Berke of the Golden Horde was the first Muslim Mongol ruler, Ghazan Khan (1271–1304) became the first Mongol ruler to make his empire an Islamic state. Even those Mongols who were Christian increasingly converted to Islam, such as Oljeitu (1280–1316), Ghazan’s brother. As was the custom, when a new khan came to the throne, the patriarch of the Nestorian Christians, who in 1304 was Mar Yahba Allah (1245–1317), came to their court. The following account reveals how the patriarch’s standing diminished with the increasing Islamization of the Mongols.

And because the great Amirs, who held the steering oars of the Government of the kingdom [of the deceased king], ruled firmly, no rebellion broke out, and no confusion took place in any place whatsoever. They sent straightway for the brother of the deceased king on his father’s side, who was called ULJAITO, who was in the countries of Khorasan, and they brought him and made him king on the 12th day of the month Tammuz (July) of this year [A.D. 1304]. [Oljaito was the third son of Arghon and was born in 1281. At birth he was called Oljai-Buka, and later Kharbande, i.e. the “Mule-tee,” which was changed to “Khudabende,” i.e. “Servant of God.” His mother was the daughter of Prince Saruji, the brother of Queen Dokuz Khatun]. And because he had been baptized, when he was a child, in the time of his father, King ARGHON, he used to run in and out often to see Mar Catholicus with his mother URGAU (ARGAU) Khatun, who was a Christian queen. And he enjoyed free and friendly intercourse with him, and loved him with a boundless affection. And the Catholicus rejoiced greatly at his accession [to the throne], and he thought and said, “This [king] will honour the congregation more than his father and his brother when he hath seen and learned the

honour in which they held it, and their love towards it.” And he did not perceive that voluntary motions vanquish and overcome those which are habitual and natural, especially when they take root and flourish. Now the king had become a Hagaraya (i.e., Muhammadan) in those regions and he had acquired another kind of instruction (or education?) which had made him to forget all the things that appertained to the first. And through the numerous discussions which he had heard there, was found in him a kind of hatred of the Christians.

Source: E. A. Wallis Budge, ed. and trans., *The History of the Life and Travels of Rabban Sauma* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1928), <http://depts.washington.edu/silkroad/texts/sauma.html#ch17>.

45. MARCO POLO ON MONGOL CUSTOMS (ca. 1324)

Marco Polo, the 13th-century Venetian traveler, wrote extensively about his visits to Central Asia and China and his contact with the people and cultures of that region. The Mongols, or the Tartars as they are called in the following extract, were originally nomadic people from the Central Asian steppes. As pastoralists, they moved around throughout the year in search of grazing land for their herds. Many aspects of their daily lives reflected their nomadic lifestyle; houses were portable gers (or yurts), and meals consisted largely of meat and milk from livestock. In this excerpt, Marco Polo describes Mongolian houses and cuisine.

Now that we have begun to speak of the Tartars, I have plenty to tell you on that subject. The Tartar custom is to spend the winter in warm plains, where they find good pasture for their cattle, whilst in summer they betake themselves to a cool climate among the mountains and valleys, where water is to be found as well as woods and pastures.

Their houses are circular, and are made of wands covered with felts. These are carried along with them whithersoever they go; for the wands are so strongly bound together, and likewise so well combined, that the frame can be made very light. Whenever they erect these huts the door is always to the south. They also have wagons covered in black felt so efficaciously that no rain can get in. These are drawn by oxen and camels, and the women and children travel in them. The women do the buying and selling, and whatever is necessary to provide for the husband and household; for the men all lead the life of gentlemen, troubling themselves about nothing but hunting and hawking, and looking after their goshawks and falcons, unless it be the practice of warlike exercises.

They live on the milk and meat which their herds supply, and on the produce of the chase; and they eat all kinds of flesh, including that of horses and dogs, and Pharaoh's rats, of which last there are great numbers in burrows on those plains. Their drink is mare's milk.

Source: Marco Polo and Rustichello of Pisa, *The Book of Ser Marco Polo the Venetian Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East*, edited by Henry Yule (London: John Murray, 1903), 251–252.

46. GILLES LI MUISIS'S ACCOUNT OF THE BLACK DEATH AT THE SIEGE OF KAFFA (1347)

Gilles Li Muisis (d. 1352) was a medieval chronicler, poet, and abbot of a monastery. Among the events he recorded not only concerned the kingdoms immediately around him, such as Flanders and France, but also distant events. Muisis survived the Black Death. In this report, the author is discussing the city of Kaffa (Caffa), a Genoese trading colony on the Crimean Peninsula. The plague struck the Mongols as they laid siege to it. According to Muisis, the mortality of the Mongols was so grievous that they were eager to convert to Christianity, at least until they learned that the Black Death played no favorites for any religion.

I heard that in the previous year, 1347, an innumerable horde of Tartars laid siege to a very strong city inhabited by Christians. The calamitous disease befell the Tartar army, and the mortality was great and widespread that scarcely one in twenty of them remained alive. After discussing it among themselves, they came to the decision that such a great mortality was caused by the vengeance of God, and they resolved to enter the city which they were besieging and ask to be made Christians. Accordingly the most powerful of the survivors entered the city, but they found few men there for all the others had died. And when they saw that the mortality had broken out among the Christians as well as among themselves, because of the unhealthy air, they decided to keep their own religion.

Source: Gilles Li Muisis, "Receuil des Chroniques de Flander II," in *The Black Death*, edited and translated by Rosemary Horrox (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1994), 46.

47. ACCOUNT OF SAMARKAND UNDERTIMUR-I LENG (ca. 1403–1406)

Timur-I Leng (Tamerlane) followed the model of the Mongols by relocating skilled workers to his domains. In his wars with the Golden Horde, Timur destroyed not only their armies but also their cities to redirect all trade to Samarkand, where he employed the skilled artisans from across his empire. In Samarkand, once ruined by the Mongols, goods of the highest quality were now being produced.

Thus trade has always been fostered by Timur with the view of making his capital the noblest of cities: and during all his conquests wheresoever he came he carried off the best men of the population to people Samaraqand, bringing thither together the master-craftsmen of all nations. Thus from Damascus he carried away with him all the weavers of that city, those who worked at the silk looms. Further the bow-makers who produced those cross-bows which are so famous. . . .

Within its walls however Timur holds in durance and captivity upward of a thousand workmen; these labour at making plate-armour and helms, with bows and arrows,

and this business they are kept at work throughout the whole of their time in the service of his highness.

Source: Gonzalez de Clavijo, *Embassy to Tamerlane, 1403–1406*, translated by Guy Le Strange (London: Routledge, 1928), 87–88, 90.

48. ACCOUNT OF THE BATTLE OF THE UGRA RIVER FROM THE NIKONIAN CHRONICLE (1480)

The Battle of the Ugra River, which is seen in Russian history as the end of Tatar rule in Muscovy, was less a battle than a skirmish with much posturing. Neither Ahmed, khan of the Great Horde, nor Grand Prince Ivan III were willing to commit to a pitched battle. The Muscovite forces and the Mongols were separated by the Ugra River, which froze over because the battle took place in early winter. Ivan began to retreat, fearing that the Mongols would cross. Despite the opportunity, Ahmed did not attack but also retreated for reasons unknown. The various authors of the Nikonian Chronicle, a church chronicle, attributed Ahmed's actions to the divine intervention of the Virgin Mary (Theokotos, Greek for "Mother of God").

At that time a miracle occurred of the Most Holy Theotokos, and it was marvelous to see. Each side retreated from the other and no one intervened. But as soon as the sons of Russia retreated from the shore, the Tatars fled, seized by fear, believing that the Russians were retreating from the shore so as to fight there with them [attacking their rearguard]. At the same time our men, imagining that the Tatars had crossed the river, fell back to Kremenets. Khan Ahmet was frightened by God. Not pursued by anyone, he fled from the river Ugra into the Lithuanian land, into the dominion of the [Polish] king, fighting in his land because of his [the King's] treachery.

Source: Serge A. Zenkovsky, ed., *The Nikonian Chronicle*, Vol. 5, translated by Serge A. Zenkovsky and Betty Jean Zenkovsky (Princeton, NJ: Kingston, 1989), 214.

APPENDIX

RULERS

YEKE MONGGOL ULUS (MONGOL EMPIRE)

Name	Reign
Chinggis Khan (Temujin)	1206–1227
Tolui (regent)	1227–1229
Ogodei Khan	1229–1241
Toregene (regent)	1241–1246
Guyuk Khan	1246–1248
Oghul Qaimish (regent)	1248–1251
Mongke Khan	1251–1259

YUAN EMPIRE

Name	Reign
Khubilai Khan	1260–1294
Temur Oljeitu	1294–1307
Khaishan	1307–1311
Ayurbarwada	1311–1320
Shidebala	1320–1323
Yisun-Temur	1323–1328
Khoshila	1328–1329
Tuq-Temur	1328, 1329–1332
Irinchinbal	1332
Toghon Temur	1332–1370

THE IL-KHANATE

Name	Reign
Hulegu	1256–1265
Abaqa	1265–1282
Ahmad	1282–1284
Arghun	1284–1291

Geikhatu	1291–1295
Baidu	1295
Ghazan	1295–1304
Oljeitu	1304–1316
Abu Said	1316–1335

THE GOLDEN HORDE

Name	Reign
Jochi	d. 1225
Batu	1225–1255
Sartaq	1256–1257
Ulaghachi	1257
Berke	1257–1266
Mongke-Temur	1267–1280
Tode Mongke	1280–1287
Tole Buqa	1287–1291
Toqtoa	1291–1312
Uzbek	1313–1341
Tinibeg	1341–1342
Janibeg	1342–1357
Berdibeg	1357–1359
Qulpa	1359
Nawroz	1360
Khidyr	1361
Temur	1361
Murid	1362–1364
Aziz	1364–1367
Mehmet	1367–1370
Mamai (kingmaker)	1370–1380
Toqtamysh	1380–1398
Timur Qutlugh	1391–1393, 1398–1400
Shadibeg	1400–1407
Pulad	1407–1412
Timur Khan	1412–1415

CHAGATAI KHANATE

Name	Reign
Chagatai	d. 1242
Qara Hulegu	1242–1246
Yisu Mongke	1246–1251
Orghina (regent)	1251–1260
Alghu	1260–1266

Mubarak Shah	1266
Baraq	1266–1271
Negubei	1271
Toqa Temur	1272
Domination of Qaidu	1272–1301
Dua	1281–1307
Konchek	1307–1308
Nalighu	1308–1309
Esen Buqa	1309–1318
Kebek	1318–1327
Eljigidei	1327–1330
Tore Temur	1330–1331
Tarmashirin	1331–1334
Buzan	1334–1335
Changshi	1335–1338
Yisun Temur	1338–1341
Ali Khalil	1341–1343
Muhammad	1342–1343
Qazan	1343–1346/1347
Danishmend	1346–1358
Buyan Quli	1358
Shah Temur	1359
Tughluq Temur	1359–1363
Mawarannahr comes under the control of Amir Timur (Tamerlane, Timur-i Leng)	1370–1405

GLOSSARY

aarts A soft and slightly fermented cheese.

aaruuul A hard, dried cheese curd.

ail A nomadic camp, usually consisting of a few *gers* belonging to the same family.

aimag An administrative unit in modern-day Mongolia, comparable to a province.

airag Fermented mare's milk with a low alcohol content.

alginchi/alginchin The vanguard and scouts of the *tanmas*.

amir/emir Arabic term for commander. Most of the Islamic sources also use this term in place of *noyan*.

anda A blood brother. It was a relationship that bonded two men together for life and was often considered stronger than normal familial ties. During the process, the two men or boys drank a bit of their blood and exchanged gifts.

arban A military unit of 10 men or an economic unit of 10 households.

bichechi (pl. *bichechin*) Scribes. Literally “those who write.”

bilig A maxim or saying of Chinggis Khan. While not officially a law, the maxims of Chinggis Khan carried great weight in the minds of the Mongols.

bodhisattva Someone who has attained enlightenment but remains on Earth to help others.

Cherik A military force comprised from the sedentary population that the Mongols used to garrison certain locations.

Chinggisid A descendant of Chinggis Khan. Most of the Mongolian aristocracy were Chinggisids.

daruqachi Mongolian term for a governor assigned to a town or district who would also have some military authority with a small body of troops.

Dasht-i Kipchak The Kipchak steppe.

deel/degel The traditional knee-length coat that fastened on one side.

Five Snouts The animals that are herded in Mongolia. Although they are not always used by all nomads, some combination exists. The Five Snouts are horses, sheep, goats, cows (or yaks), and camels.

Gelukpa The Yellow sect of Tibetan Buddhism. It is called the Yellow sect due to the color of the monks' robes and hats.

ger The round, felt-covered tent used by the nomads. Also known by its Turkic name, yurt.

gobi A gravelly desert. The Gobi Desert is the largest of many gobi areas in Mongolia.

guregen A son-in-law of Chinggis Khan. This title was eventually used for anyone who married a Chinggisid woman.

halqa Non-Mamluk cavalry in the armies of the Mamluk Sultanate.

Han Ethnic Chinese. The ethnicity name is derived from the Han dynasty.

Hoyin Irgen Literally, the people of the forest who lived in the wooded areas around Lake Baikal, north of the Mongolian steppes and west to the Yenesei River.

jaghun A military unit of 100 men, comprised of 10 *arbans*. Also used to refer to economic units of 10 households.

keshik The bodyguard of the khan.

keshikten The actual members of the *keshik*.

khainag The result of crossbreeding cows and yaks. The *khainag* thrives in areas of altitude ranging from 5,250 to 8,202 feet (1,600 to 2,500 meters).

khan A title equivalent to “king.”

Khitan A proto-Mongolian group that established the Liao dynasty and dominated much of Mongolia from 960 to 1125.

lama A Buddhist monk.

Mamluk A slave soldier in the Islamic world.

Manchus A Tungusic people from what is now northeastern China also known as Manchuria. They were seminomadic and dominated China from 1644 to 1912. Included in their empire were virtually all Mongolian groups.

minggan See *minqan*.

minqan A military unit of 1,000 men or an economic unit of 1,000 households. Also spelled *minggan*.

nasij A gold brocade cloth in great demand by the Mongol elite. Skilled textile workers were often sent to production centers to weave it.

nerge A hunting technique used by the Mongols that also became a training technique and a common tactical and strategic practice. In the *nerge*, the Mongols fanned out over several miles, forming a circle. As the circle contracted, it trapped all of the animals or enemy within it.

nokhor A companion or vassal during the pre-Mongol Empire period.

noyan Lord or commander. The title initially referred to a military commander.

ongghon A felt doll used in shamanism. The doll represents a protective spirit, usually an ancestor. The *ongghon* is kept in the *ger*.

orda See *ordo*.

ordo Mongolian and Turkic term referring to the camp of a prince or general. It also serves as the root of the English term “horde.”

ordu See *ordo*.

ortaq See *ortoq*.

ortoq A merchant financed by the Mongol elite.

Parthian shot When an archer turns backward in his saddle and shoots as he retreats. Refers to a practice of the Parthians when they defeated the Romans at Carrhae in 53 BCE.

qadi A judge of religious law in the Islamic world. Typically the *qadi* was government appointed.

qorchi A quiver bearer or archer in the *keshik*. The *qorcin* (pl.) consisted of 1,000 men and was one of the three major divisions of the bodyguard.

quriltai An assembly of Mongol leaders, including nobility and the commanders, in which matters of state were discussed.

qurut Powdered milk or paste made from milk. It was reconstituted in boiling water or in water skins placed on the horse's saddle. The movement of the horse mixed the ingredients together.

Ruruan Possibly the forerunners of the Mongols. The Ruruan confederation dominated Mongolia from the fourth to the sixth centuries. When they appeared in Eastern Europe, Europeans called them Avars.

samsara The cycle of birth and death and rebirth in Buddhism.

Second Conversion The arrival of Buddhism in the 16th century. It is called the Second Conversion, as Khubilai Khan's preference for Buddhism is usually considered the first period of Mongolian Buddhism.

shahna See *daruqachi*.

shanyu The title used by a Xiongnu ruler, equivalent to king or emperor.

tanma A military force stationed along the borders between the steppe and sedentary lands.

tanmachi (pl. *tanmachin*) A member of a *tanma*. The term also referred to the commander of the unit.

tuq The standard or banner of the Mongols. This typically was a drum attached with nine horse tails atop a pole.

tenggeri Heaven. Tenggeri was the sky god of the medieval Mongols.

tumen (pl. *tumed*) A military unit of 10,000 men. *Tumen* also referred to 10,000 households for taxation.

ulus A Mongolian term generally used to refer to a state, a nation, possessions, or patrimony.

Wadifiyyas Mongol refugees who took shelter in the Mamluk sultanate. Typically they deserted from the Il-Khanid state. They often served as *halqa* forces for the Mamluks.

wazir An Arabic term referring to the chamberlain of the court of either a caliph or a sultan. The *wazir* often handled the daily affairs of state. In some instances the *wazir* was the power behind the throne. Also known as the vizier.

Xianbei Tribal confederation that succeeded the Xiongnu and dominated Mongolia from approximately 150 to 528. Members of the Xianbei confederation also established the Northern Wei dynasty in China (386–528).

Xiongnu A tribal confederation that dominated Mongolia from roughly 300 BCE to 150 CE. In the West, they became known as the Huns.

yam The Mongol postal station and messenger system. It functioned similarly to the American Pony Express.

yasa The ordinances of Chinggis Khan.

Yeke Monggol Ulus Meaning “Great Mongol State,” a Mongolian term for the Mongol Empire.

zhud A winter storm of blizzard intensity that devastates the herds of nomads.

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INDEX

Bold indicates volume numbers.

- Abaoji (r. 907–927), **1**:217–218
- Abaqa (r. 1265–1282)
- Clement (Pope) and, **1**:126
 - consolidating il-khan rule, **1**:125
 - cultural exchange, **1**:125
 - death of, **1**:126
 - engagement with Europe, **1**:125–126
 - family of, **1**:124
 - Hethum, King of Cilicia, and, **2**:21–22
 - invasions of his realm, **1**:125
 - Jaime I of Aragon and, **1**:126
 - Khubilai Khan and, **1**:125
 - Khurasan and, **1**:82
 - Majd al-Mulk, **1**:125
 - overview of, **1**:124–126
 - Transcaucasus fighting, **1**:124
 - as viceroy of Khurasan, **1**:124
- Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258)
- Abbasid Revolution, **2**:165
 - the Abbasids, **2**:165
 - Baghdad, creation of, **2**:165
 - Baghdad, siege of (1258), **2**:166
 - Buyid (934–1062) family and, **2**:166
 - Caliph al-Mustaʿsim, **2**:166
 - Caliph al-Nasir (r. 1180–1225), **2**:166
 - Caliph al-Qaʿim (1031–1075), **2**:166, 167
 - Chormaqan, **2**:166
 - Mongol destruction of, **2**:164
 - naming of, **2**:164
 - Otrar Massacre (1218), **2**:166
 - overview of, **2**:164–167
 - photograph of the ribat in Monastir, Tunisia, **2**:165
 - Prophet Muhammad (d. 632), **2**:164
 - Seljuk Turks of Rum, **2**:166
 - Shia Muslims and, **2**:165
 - Sunni Muslims and, **2**:164
 - temporal authority of, **2**:164, 165–166
 - Umayyad Caliphate and, **2**:165
 - unexpected alliance, **2**:167
- ʿAbd Allah, **2**:56
- Abu Said (r. 1317–1335)
- Amir Chuban, **1**:126
 - Chuban and, **1**:127, 128, 144–145
 - conversion to Islam, **2**:34
 - death of, **1**:128
 - Dimashq, execution of, **1**:144
 - Golden Horde, **1**:127
 - Il-Khanate, disintegration of, **1**:122, 128
 - Il-Khanate and, **1**:122
 - Il-Khanate golden age, **1**:126
 - illustration of, **1**:127
 - invasion by Uzbek Khan, **1**:127
 - Mamluks, **1**:127–128
 - marriage of, **1**:128, 145
 - overview of, **1**:126–129
 - portrayal of, **1**:128
 - Rashid al-Din, execution of, **1**:126
- Abu Yazid al-Bistami, **1**:246
- Abulkhair Khan, **1**:254
- Adai, **1**:27
- Aguda (1068–1123), **1**:219, **2**:176
- Ahmad Teguder (r. 1282–1284), **2**:33
- Aizong Wanyan Shouxu, **1**:213
- Alaʿ al-Din Muhammad II (d. 1220), **2**:35, 37
- Alan Goa and the arrow parable

- Alan Goa, 1:104, 2:1
 as foundational, 2:4
 hierarchy of tribes, 2:5–6
 Niru'un, Durlukin, and social structure, 2:6
 overview of, 2:4–6
 reactments of, 2:6
 story of, 2:4–5
 uses of, 2:6
- Alans (Asud)
 alliances of, 1:197
 alternative name for, 1:197
 capital of, 1:197
 Catholicism and, 1:198
 Caucasian Alans, 1:198
 deportation of, 1:198
 Hunnic expansion and, 1:197
 influence of, 1:198
 location of, 1:197
 Mongol defeat of, 1:197–198, 2:96
 Mongol first encounter with, 1:197
 name change, 1:198
 Nayan's Rebellion and, 1:198
 during the Northern Yuan period, 1:198
 Ossetians, 1:198–199
 overview of, 1:194, 197–199
 as a valued asset, 1:198
- Alaqa-beki, 1:236, 237
- Alaqush Digt Quri, 1:235–236
- Ala-ud-Din Khalji, 2:175
- Alba qubchiri*, 1:100
- Aleksandr (Alexander), Prince (1221–1263),
 2:97, 228
- Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263)
 battle on the ice, 1:67
 campaigns against the Chud', 1:65
 collection of the *tamgha* (customs duties),
 1:66
 crusades in the Baltic and, 1:65–66
 fresco of, 1:65
 at Lake Peipus in April 1242, 1:66
 loyalty to the Mongols, 1:65
 Mongol invasion of the Rus' principalities,
 1:65
 Novgorod and, 1:64, 65
 overview of, 1:64–67
 as prince of Vladimir, 1:66
 resistance to the census, 1:66
 as a Russian hero, 1:65
- Sartaq (r. 1256–1257), 1:66
 submission to the Mongols, 1:64, 65, 66
 as a symbol of Soviet resistance, 1:67
 Teutonic Knights and, 1:67, 66
- Alexius I Comnenus, 2:168
- Alghu of the Chagatai Khanate
 Ariq Boke and, 1:20, 21, 23, 180
 in Central Asia, 1:177
 demise of, 1:86, 181
 Orghina marriage, 1:71, 177
 Qaidu and, 1:86
- Alginchin*
 Bodonchar and, 2:65
 conception of, 2:65
 definition of, 2:64, 112
 importance of, 2:65
manglai and *gejige*, 2:66
 Muqali and, 2:65
 overview of, 2:64–66
tanmachin, 2:66
- Alice of Jerusalem, 2:170–171, 173
- Almaliq, 1:2
- Al-Salih Ayyubi (r. 1240–1249), 1:223, 2:191
- Altan Khan of the Tumed, 1:28
- Altan Khatun (fl. 1220–1245), 2:85
- Altan Orda, 1:73
- Altan Urugh and the Chinggisid Principle,
 2:15
- Altan Urugh (Golden Family), 1:8
- Ambaghai, 1:249–250
- Amidha Buddha, 1:256
- Amir Chuban, 1:126
- Amiranshah, 1:41
- Amir-ordo*, 1:93
- Anatolia, 2:99
- Anda* bond/relationship, 2:59
- Anderson, Eugene, 2:12
- Andreevich, Vladimir, 2:30
- Andronicus II Palaeologus (r. 1282–1328), 2:42
- Animal products, 2:122
- Ankara, Battle of (1402)
 Bayezid I, 2:67
 description of, 2:67
 Mehmet I, 2:67
 overview of, 2:67–68
 precipitating events, 2:67
 Timur (Tamerlane), 2:67
 water supply, 2:67

- Anquan (r. 1206–1211), 2:206
- Antioch, Principality of
- Alice of Jerusalem, 2:173, 170–171
 - Assizes of Antioch*, 2:168
 - Baldwin I, 2:168
 - Baldwin II, 2:169, 170, 171
 - Baldwin III, 2:172
 - Battle of Ager Sanguinis (Field of Blood), 2:170
 - Baybars I conquest of, 2:174
 - Bernard of Valence, 2:168
 - Bohemond I of Taranto, 2:168, 169
 - Bohemond II, 2:170
 - Bohemond III, 2:172
 - Bohemond IV, 2:173
 - Bohemond V, 2:174
 - Bohemond VII, 2:174
 - Bursuq ibn Bursuq of Hamadan, 2:170
 - capital city of, 2:168
 - as a commercial center, 2:168
 - Constance, 2:171, 172
 - Constantine of Lampron, 2:173
 - Daimbert of Jerusalem, 2:168
 - dates of, 2:167
 - establishment of, 2:167
 - First Crusade and, 2:167, 168
 - founders of, 2:168
 - Frankish state, 2:167, 168
 - Frederick I Barbarossa, 2:172
 - Frederick II, 2:173
 - Fulk, 2:170
 - Henry of Champagne, 2:173
 - Hetum of Cilicia., 2:174
 - Hospitaller castle of Margat, 2:174
 - Ilghazi of Mardin, 2:170
 - Innocent III (Pope), 2:173
 - John II Comnenus, 2:171
 - Joscelin II of Edessa, 2:171
 - Knights Hospitaller, 2:172, 173
 - Knights Templar, 2:173
 - Laodikeia, 2:169, 172, 174
 - Leon II of Cilicia, 2:173
 - Les Chetifs*, 2:171
 - location of, 2:168
 - Lombard expedition in the Crusade of 1101, 2:169
 - Manuel I Comnenus, 2:171, 172
 - Maurice of Porto, 2:169
 - Nur al-Din, 2:171, 172
 - overview of, 2:167–174
 - Philip of Antioch, 2:173
 - Ralph of Dom-front, 2:170
 - Raymond III, 2:173
 - Raymond of Antioch, 2:173
 - Raymond of Poitiers, 2:170, 171
 - Raymond-Rupen, 2:173
 - Reynald of Châtillon, 2:171, 172
 - Riwan of Aleppo, 2:169
 - Roger of Antioch, 2:169–170
 - Saladin, 2:172
 - siege of the city of Antioch (1097–1098), 2:168
 - Tancred of Lecce, 2:168, 169
 - Treaty of Devol, 2:169
- Antung (1245–1293), 2:113
- Anushtigin Gharchai, 2:181
- Aq Qoyunlus and the Safavids, 2:78
- Archery, 2:111
- Arghun (r. 1284–1291)
- Oljeitu and, 1:174
 - Sa'd al-Dawla and, 1:210
 - town of Sultaniyya and, 1:39
- Arghun Aqa, 1:7, 42, 232
- Ariq Boke
- Alghu and, 1:20, 71
 - Berke and, 1:22
 - civil war, 1:3, 115, 168
 - Khubilai Khan and, 1:20, 21, 71
 - overview of, 1:xix
- Armenian account of the Mongol's divine right to rule (early 14th century), 2:253–254
- Armor
- boiled leather, 2:69
 - chain mail, 2:68
 - coats, 2:68
 - deel* or *degel*, 2:68
 - helmets, 2:69
 - image of, 2:69
 - John of Plano Carpini's description of the Mongol armor (1240s), 2:226–227
 - lamellar armor, 2:68
 - overview of, 2:68–70
 - silk shirts, 2:69–70
- Arslan Atsiz Khwarazmshah (r. 1127–1156), 2:182

- Arugtai of the Asud, 1:27
- Assassins (1090–1256 CE)
- Ala al-Din, 2:252
 - assassin, the term, 1:199
 - assassination of Nizam al-Mulk, 1:200–201
 - Castle Masyaf in Syria (image of), 1:200
 - Ch'ang Te's description of the Assassins (1250s), 2:232–233
 - deep cover, 1:201
 - drug use, 1:199, 201
 - fame of, 1:199
 - goal of, 1:199
 - Hasan Sabbah (d. 1124) and, 1:200–201
 - hashish and, 1:199
 - Hulegu and, 1:155
 - Marco Polo's account of (ca. 1300), 2:252–253
 - Nizari Ismailis, 1:155, 199, 200, 201
 - Old Man of the Mountain, 1:199, 200
 - Old Man of the Mountain's fortress, 1:199
 - overview of, 1:194, 199–202
 - secret identities, 1:201
 - Sinan (d. 1192) and, 1:200, 201
 - in Syria, 1:200
 - work of, 1:201
- Asutai, 1:168
- Atsiz, 2:180, 182
- Atwood, Christopher P., 1:78, 2:152
- Avars (558–796), 2:184
- Ayn Jalut, Battle of (1260)
- description of, 2:71
 - location of, 2:70
 - Mamluks victory, factors influencing, 2:71
 - overview of, 2:70–72
 - precipitating events, 2:70
 - Qutuz, 2:70
 - significance of, 2:71–72
 - strength of forces, 2:70
 - Syria *tumen*, 2:70–71
- Ayushiridara, 1:26, 50
- Baba Isaq (1240/1241), 2:199
- Baba Tukles converts the Khan, 1:54
- Babur (1483–1530), 1:89
- Baghdad, creation of, 2:165
- Baghdad, siege of (1258)
- Caliph al-Musta'sim, 2:72, 166
 - depiction of, 2:73, 106
 - description of, 2:73–74
 - Hulegu and, 2:72–74
 - Ibn Alqami and, 2:72–74
 - overview of, 2:63, 72–75
 - pillaging of, 2:74
 - precipitating events, 2:72–74
- Baghdad Khatun, 1:145
- Bahriyya, 2:191
- Baidar and Orda, 2:18, 19, 100, 101
- Baiju (d. 1260)
- administration of Anatolia, 1:68
 - administration of Rum, 1:68
 - administration of Tabriz, 1:42
 - administration of the Middle East, 1:68
 - Altan Khatun and, 1:68, 2:85
 - attitude to Islam, 1:68
 - Baghdad, siege of (1258), 1:68–69, 2:74
 - campaigns against the Abbasid Caliphate, 1:68
 - envoy from Pope Innocent IV, 1:68
 - Hulegu and, 1:68–69
 - lineage of, 1:67
 - overview of, 1:67–69
 - as a replacement to Chormaqan, 1:68, 2:98
 - Seljuk and, 1:63, 68, 2:98
 - Tabriz, 1:42
- Baldwin I (of Boulogne), 2:168
- Baldwin II, 2:169, 170, 171
- Baldwin III, 2:172
- Baljuna Covenant (1203)
- definition of, 2:6
 - Jochi Qasar, 2:7
 - at Lake Baljuna, 2:7, 8
 - overview of, 2:6–8
 - Temujin, 2:6–8
 - truth of, 2:7
 - Uyghur Chinqai, 2:7
- Bar Hebraeus (1226–1286), 2:235
- Baraq
- Mubarak Shah and, 2:33
 - overview of, 1:72
 - Peace of Qatwan (1267), 2:37–39
 - Qaidu defeat of, 1:181
 - Samarkand, plunder of, 1:181
- Bartholomew of Cremona, 2:56
- Battle
- of Ager Sanguinis (Field of Blood), 2:170
 - of Ankara, 2:67–68

- of Ayn Jalut, 2:64, 70–72, 174
- of Chakirmaut, 1:141, 226, 227, 228, 2:79–81
- of Hattin, 2:172
- of the Irtysh River, 1:183, 227, 228, 2:89–91
- of the Kalka River, 2:62, 95–97
- of Kediri, 1:165
- of Khujand, 2:180
- of Kose Dagħ (1243), 2:62, 97–99
- of Kulikovo Pole, 2:4, 29–32, 50
- of La Forbie, 1:223
- of Liegnitz (1241), 2:62, 99–102
- at Mohi, 2:19, 63, 102–105
- of Myriocephalum, 2:198
- of Qatwan, 2:180, 182
- of the Ugra River, 2:258
- Battle on the ice, 1:67
- Batu (1203–1255), 1:130
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:129
 - as founder of the Golden Horde, 1:130
 - Guyuk and, 1:130
 - his performance as a military leader, 1:130
 - invasion of Europe, 1:130, 2:18–19
 - invasion of Hungary, 2:100
 - invasion of northeastern Russia, 1:129–130
 - Jochi and, 1:129
 - Mohi, Battle of (April 1241), 2:103–104
 - Mongke and, 1:130
 - overview of, 1:122, 129–131
 - reputation of, 1:130
 - Toluid Revolution, 1:167
- Batu-Bolod, 1:27
- Batu-Mongke Dayan Khan, 1:27–28
- Bayan Chingsang, 2:196
- Bayan Noyan (1236–1295), 1:46, 49, 70, 182
- Baybars I (1223–1277)
 - alliance with Berke, 1:133
 - as al-Zahir (the Victorious), 1:132
 - Antioch, capture of, 1:133
 - Bahri Mamluks, 1:131
 - Battle of Ayn Jalut, 2:71
 - Cilicia, invasion of, 2:21–22
 - compared to Jalal al-Din, 1:123
 - conquest of Antioch, 2:174
 - full name of, 1:131
 - illustration of, 1:132
 - Mamluk Sultanate, transformation of, 1:133
 - military reforms of, 1:133
 - military training of, 1:131
 - against the Mongols, 1:132
 - overview of, 1:131–134
 - Qutuz and, 1:132
 - as the ruler of Egypt and Syria, 1:132
 - significance of, 1:131
 - successes of, 1:131
- Bayezid I, 2:67
- Bekhter, murder of, 1:154
- Bela IV (r. 1235–1270), 2:100, 103
- Belgunutei, 2:4
- Bella Antiochena* (Walter of the Chancellor), 2:170
- Benedict the Pole, 1:204
- Berber Marinid (1244–1465) dynasty, 1:158
- Berke Khan (r. 1257–1266)
 - Abaqa, 1:124, 125
 - Ariq Boke and, 1:20, 22
 - conversion to Islam, 1:xix, 2:32
 - Golden Horde, 1:3, 48
 - Hulegu and, 1:xix, 22
 - New Sarai and, 1:34
 - Nogai and, 1:24
 - overview of, 1:74
 - war with Hulegu, 1:xix–xx, 157
- Bernard of Valence, 2:168
- Bibi-Khanom, mosque of, 2:194
- Bi-chi, 2:140
- Bichqa, 1:168
- Black Death (mid-14th century)
 - biological warfare, attempt at, 2:10
 - Black Plague, 1:159
 - bubonic plague, 2:9
 - in Cairo, 2:10
 - cause of, 2:8–9
 - dates of, 2:8
 - death toll, 2:9, 10
 - death toll of the ruling Mongols, 2:61
 - economic impact of, 2:9, 10
 - forms of, 2:9
 - Gilles Li Muisis's account of the Black Death
 - at the siege of Kaffa (1347), 2:257
 - intercontinental trade routes, 2:10
 - Kaffa in the Crimea, 2:9–10, 257
 - overview of, 2:8–10
 - plague's transmission to Europe, 2:9
 - pneumonic plague, 2:9
 - Red Turban Revolt and, 2:3
 - septicemic type, 2:9

- spread of, 2:8
- vector of, 2:9
- Blue Horde
 - Bayan Khan, 1:70
 - boundaries of, 1:69
 - Chimtai Khan, 1:70
 - Golden Horde (Jochid Ulus), 1:69, 70
 - independence of, 1:70
 - Islam and, 1:69
 - Kupalak, 1:70
 - Mubarakh Khoja, 1:70
 - Orda and, 1:69–70
 - overview of, 1:69–71
 - Qara-Nogai, 1:70
 - Qonichi and, 1:70
 - as subordinate to the Golden Horde, 1:69
 - Toqa-Temur, 1:70
 - Toqtamysh, 1:70
 - Urus Khan, 1:70
 - White Horde, 1:70
- Bodonchar, 1:104, 2:5, 65
- Bohemond I of Taranto, 2:168, 169
- Bohemond II, 2:170
- Bohemond III, 2:172
- Bohemond IV, 2:173
- Bohemond V, 2:174
- Bohemond VI, 1:132, 2:174
- Bohemond VII, 2:174
- Bolok irgen*, 1:104, 105
- Bombs, 2:87
- Boniface VIII (Pope), 2:254
- Boqta* headdress, 2:221
- Borjigid, 2:6
- Borte (ca. 1161–1230)
 - abduction of, 1:134
 - daughters of, 1:134
 - establishment of the Mongol Empire, 1:134
 - as an example of Mongol womanhood, 1:135
 - first khatun of the empire, 1:134
 - marriage and, 1:134, 233
 - orphans and, 1:135
 - overview of, 1:122, 134–135
 - paternal illegitimacy question, 1:135
 - reputation of, 1:135
 - roles of elite Mongol women, 1:134–135
 - sons of, 1:134
 - Teb Tenggeri, 1:135, 2:53
 - Temujin and, 1:134, 233, 234
- Botoqui Tarqun, 1:203
- Bubonic plague, 2:9
- Buddhism
 - Chabi Khatun (d. 1281), 1:136, 137, 235
 - conversion to, 1:35, 37
 - Kara Khitai and, 2:180
 - Khubilai Khan (1215–1294), 2:154
 - Korean Buddhism, 2:187
 - overview of, 1:196
 - religious toleration, 1:2
 - second conversion to, 1:28
 - sects and groupings of, 1:196
 - Tibetan Buddhism, 1:137
 - Toqta Khan (r. 1290–1312), 1:53
 - White Lotus school of, 1:255–257
- Bugunutei, 2:4
- Bukharan Sayid Ajall, 1:7
- Bulukhan, 1:45
- Bunyashiri, 1:27
- Buqa, 1:16
- Buqatu Salji, 2:5, 6
- Buqu Qadagi, 2:5, 6
- Buriats, 2:145–146
- Buriyat Mongols, 1:202
- Bursuq ibn Bursuq of Hamadan, 2:170
- Buyid (934–1062), 2:166
- Buyiruc Khan, 2:80–81
- Caizhou, siege of (1233–1234)
 - cannibalism, 2:75
 - expertise in siege warfare, 2:63
 - flood the Ju River, 2:76
 - Jin Imperial Guard, desertion of, 2:75
 - Mongol-Jin War (1211–1234), 2:75, 76
 - overview of, 2:75–77
 - Song and, 2:75
 - Tachar Noyan, 2:75
- Calendar
 - confusion, 2:126
 - Daming li* calendar, 2:125
 - design of, 2:125
 - Gengwu* calendar, 2:125
 - government and the calendar, 2:124–125
 - Gregorian calendar, 2:125
 - Khubilai Khan and, 2:126
 - Muslim Astronomy Bureau (Huihui sitian jian), 2:126
 - overview of, 2:124–127

- Shoushi li* (season-granting calendar), 2:126–127
- Sino-Uyghur calendar, 2:126
- 12-animal cycle to mark the years, 2:125
- Uyghur system, 2:125
- Wannian li* calendar, 2:126
- Yelu Chucai (1189–1243), 2:125
- Caliph al-Mustaʿsim, 2:166
- Caliph al-Nasir (r. 1180–1225), 2:166, 167
- Caliph al-Qaʿim (1031–1075), 2:166, 167
- Cannibalism, 2:75
- Cannon
- earliest cannons, 2:77
 - effectiveness of, 2:77–78
 - gunpowder, 2:77
 - illustration of, 2:78
 - knights and infantry, against, 2:77–78
 - Ming use of, 2:78
 - Mongol use of, 2:77
 - overview of, 2:64, 77–79
 - role in defeating the Mongols, 2:78
 - steppe warfare, 2:78
 - Yuan use of, 2:78
- Caracole* tactic, 2:111
- Cartography, 2:188
- Castle Masyaf in Syria (image of), 1:200
- Catholicism, 2:189
- Census, application of
- cheriks* and, 2:62
 - conscription and, 2:82
 - of Ghazan, 1:113
 - of Mongke, 1:167
 - organization of households, 2:86
 - overview of, 2:50
 - of Shigi-Qutuqtu (ca. 1180–1262), 1:84
- Chabi Khatun (d. 1281)
- as advisor to her husband, 1:136, 137
 - character of, 1:137
 - description of, 1:137
 - her role as empress, 1:136
 - husband of, 1:136
 - opinions of, 1:136
 - overview of, 1:55, 123, 136–137
 - power of, 1:136
 - reputation of, 1:136
 - Song dynasty and, 1:137
 - Tibetan Buddhism and, 1:136–137, 235
 - tribe and family of, 1:136
- Chagatai Khan (d. 1242)
- adherence to the *yasa* and *yosun* of Chinggis Khan, 1:139
 - alternative spellings for, 1:138
 - appanage (*ulus*) of, 1:138
 - combat duties of, 1:138
 - death of, 1:139
 - death of a son, 1:139
 - invasion of the Jin Empire, 1:138
 - Mawarannahr, 1:138
 - Mogetuken, 1:139
 - Ogodei and, 1:138
 - overview of, 1:138–140
 - reputation of, 1:139
 - responsibilities of, 1:138
 - sons of, 1:138–139
 - wives (primary) of, 1:138
 - Yisulun, 1:138
- Chagatai Khanate
- Alghu, 1:71
 - Ariq Boke, 1:71
 - Baraq, 1:72
 - border clashes, 1:72
 - border war, 1:71
 - Chagatai Khanate, recognition of, 1:3
 - Chagatayids and, 1:71
 - Chapar, 1:72
 - Duʿa, 1:72
 - exploitation of, 1:71
 - Khubilai Khan and, 1:3
 - location of, 1:71
 - Moghulistan and Mawarannahr split, 1:72–73
 - Mubarak Shah, 1:71–72
 - Muslims and, 1:146
 - Orghina, 1:71, 72
 - overview of, 1:71–73
 - Peace of Qatwan (1267), 1:72
 - population of, 1:71
 - Qaidu, 1:72
 - Qara Hulegu, 1:71
 - rulers of, 2:260–261
 - Tarmashirin (r. 1326–1333), 1:72
- Chagatayids, 2:48
- Chaghan, 1:248
- Chakirmaut, Battle of (1204)
- Buyirug Khan, 2:80–81
 - Chinggis Khan and, 2:62, 79
 - description of, 2:79–80

- keshik* (bodyguard) in, 2:79
 Naiman and, 2:79
 overview of, 2:79–81
 precipitating events, 2:79–80
 significance of, 2:79, 80
 tactics and, 2:79, 80
- Ch'ang Te or Chang De, 2:232–233
- Chapar, 1:72
- Cherik* troops
 census and, 2:82
 conscription and, 2:81
 definition of, 2:81
 effectiveness of, 2:62
 Han *cheriks*, 2:81, 82
 non-*cherik* forces, 2:82
 overview of, 2:81–83
 positioning of, 2:82
 regular forces, 2:82
- Chila'un, 2:90, 91
- Chimtai Khan (r. 1344–1360), 1:6–7, 70
- China, conquest of, 1:115
- Chinese resentment of the Mongols, 2:44
- Chinggis Exchange
 definition of, 2:11
Huihui yaofang (Muslim Medicinal Recipes), 2:12
 Khwarazmians, 2:11
 knowledge of gunpowder, 2:88
 long-distance trade, 2:11
 medical exchanges, 2:12
The Mongol Conquests in World History (May), 2:11
 Mongol court culture, 2:11
 overview of, 2:11–13
 significance of, 2:4
Tanksuq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'ulum-i khitay (Treasure Book of the Il-Khans on the Sciences and Learning of China), 2:12
 technology, 2:12
yam, postal system, 2:11
- Chinggis Khan (1164–1227)
 achievements of, 1:140, 142–143
 Baljuna Covenant, 2:1
 Battle of Chakirmaut (1204), 2:62, 79–81
 Battle of the Irtysh River (1209), 2:62
 Battle of the Kalka River (1224), 2:62
 Bekhter, murder of, 1:140
 Buyiruc Khan, 2:80–81
 captivity of, 1:140
 confirming Temujin as Chinggis Khan, 2:39, 41
 cultural achievements of, 1:142–143
darqan, 1:48
 death of, 2:2
 decimal organization, 2:86
 defeat of the Kereit, 1:141
 defeat of the Naiman, 1:141
 hardships of, 1:140–141
 his rise to power, 1:140, 2:1
 illustration of, 1:141
 influence of his family, 2:53
 invitation to the Daoist monk K'iu Ch'ang Ch'un (May 15, 1219), 2:220–221
 Irtysh River, Battle of the (1209), 2:89–91
 Jamuqa and, 2:59, 80, 125
 Jin Empire, war with, 1:142
 Jurchedei and, 2:40
 as Jurchen vassal, 1:213
 Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan), 1:219
 Khwarazmian Empire war, 1:142
 the Khwarazmians, 2:35
 medicine and, 2:140
 military and, 2:61–62
 Oration at the Sack of Bukhara (ca. 1220), 2:223
 Otrar Massacre (1218), 2:35, 36
 overview of, 1:xv–xvii, 121, 140–143
 passage from *Jami'u't-Tawarikh* (Compendium of Chronicles) in which Chinggis Khan explains the best things in life (early 14th century), 2:254
 plunder and, 1:142
 primary concern, 1:xvii
 Qasar, relationship with, 2:52
quriltai of 1206 and, 2:1, 39–41
 rule of, 2:52, 53
 Samarkand and, 2:193
The Secret History of the Mongols, 2:149
Shengwu qinzheng lu, 2:150–151
 Teb Tenggeri death and, 2:52
 Temuge Otchigin, 2:53
 as Temujin, 1:140
 title of, 1:47
 Toghril Ong Khan and, 1:141
uluses, 1:63
 unification of Mongolia, 1:62, 140, 141

- Uyghuristan, 2:204
 writing systems, 1:64, 108
 Xi Xia, conquest of, 1:141–142, 2:205, 206
yasa, 1:58, 78
 Yeke Monggol Ulus and, 1:140, 141
 Yesugei, death of, 2:1
yosun, 1:58
 Zhongdu, 2:211
 Chinggis Khan, death of (1227)
 Altan Urugh and the Chinggisid Principle, 2:15
 burial of, 2:14
 date and place of, 2:13
 overview of, 2:13–15
 siege of Zhongxing, 2:13
 stories of, 2:13–14
 successor of, 2:14
 Yeke Monggol Ulus and, 2:14
 Chin-Temur, 1:86, 102
 Choban (d. 1327)
 Abu Said and, 1:127, 128, 144–145
 Dimaqsh Khwaja and, 1:144
 Hasan Kuchuk (Hasan the Lesser), 1:145
 killing of, 1:145
 marriage of, 1:143
 as a military commander, 1:143
 overview of, 1:143–145
 Sorqan Shira, 1:145
 Chormaqan Noyan (ca. 1200–1240)
 Abbasid Caliphate, 2:166
 death of, 2:84
 in Iran, 2:84
 notable *tanmachi*, 2:62
 overview of, 2:83–85
 sack of Gandzak, 2:84
 significance of, 2:83
 in Transcaucasia, 2:84
 transfer of authority, 1:101–102
 tsunami strategy and, 2:98
 Choros Batula Chingsan (d. ca. 1416), 1:232
 Christianity, 1:14, 2:33
 Chronology, 1:xxv–xxvii
 Chubei, 1:168
 Church of Mary in Ephesus, photograph of, 1:229
 Cilician Armenia, 2:168
 Civil war, 1:xx, 3
 Cleaves, Francis W., 2:150
 Clothes
 animal skins, 2:127
 boots, 2:128
 boqta headdress, 2:221
 deel, 2:128
 fashion influences, 2:129
 felt, 2:127, 131
 furs, 2:127
 gold brocade, 2:129
 headgear, 2:129
 materials, 2:127, 129
 overview of, 2:122, 127–130
 Phags-pa script and, 2:129–130
 silk, 2:129
 sox, 2:128
 trousers, 2:128
 wool, 2:127
 Coinage, 2:122
 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 2:251
 Composite bow, 2:89, 118, 119
 Confucianism (Neo-Confucianism), 1:243
 Constance, 2:171, 172
 Constantine of Lampron, 2:173
 Contagious diseases, 2:61
 Council of Ephesus, 1:229, 230
 Counterweight trebuchets
 depictions of, 2:106
 development of, 2:115
 Khubilai Khan and, 2:63, 115
 overview of, 2:63
 Polo, Marco, on, 2:237
 the term “trebuchet,” 2:114
 at Xiangyang, 2:208
 Crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249)
 accomplishments of, 2:17
 criticism of, 2:17
 crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249), 2:17
 Crusades term, 2:16
 First Council of Lyons (12.5), 2:17
 Frederick II and the Mongols, 2:16, 17
 Gregory IX (Pope), 2:16, 17
 Holy Roman Empire and, 2:17
 initial call for, 2:16
 Innocent IV (Pope), 2:17
 Kingdom of Jerusalem, 2:16
 overview of, 2:16–18
 plenary indulgences, 2:17
 Teutonic Knights, 2:17

- Da Yuan (Khanate China), 1:116
- Daidu
- architecture of, 1:5
 - building of, 1:5
 - curfew, 1:5
 - as Dadu, 1:4
 - destruction of, 1:6
 - imperial residences, 1:5
 - Khubilai and, 1:4
 - Li Bingzhong, 1:4
 - location of, 1:4, 5
 - overview of, 1:3, 4–6
 - planning of, 1:4, 5
- Daimbert of Jerusalem, 2:168
- Dalbag, 1:27
- Darkhad *onggons*, 2:146
- Daruqachin*, 1:9
- Dayan Khan, 1:26
- Dayir Noyan, 1:102
- Dayir Usun, 1:227
- De Rachewiltz, Igor, 2:150
- Decimal organization
- arban*, 2:85
 - arban-u noyan/mingan-u noyan*, 2:85–86
 - in China, 2:86
 - Chinggis Khan and, 2:86
 - first known use, 2:85
 - household application of, 2:86–87
 - jagun*, 2:85
 - jagun-u noyan*, 2:86
 - Jurchen and, 2:86
 - Kereit and, 2:86
 - the *kuriyen*, 2:86
 - mingans*, 2:86, 87
 - noyan* (commander), 2:85
 - overview of, 2:85–87
 - in Russia, Transcaucasia, and the Middle East, 2:86
 - at the squad level, 2:85–86
 - taxation and, 2:87
 - tumen*, 2:85
 - tumen* unit, 2:87
 - users of, 2:85
- Deel*, 2:128
- Deguang (927–947), 1:218
- Dei Sechen, 1:234
- Delhi Sultanate
- Ala-ud-Din Khalji, 2:175
 - definition of, 2:174
 - Ghiyas-ud-Din Balban, 2:175
 - Illuttmish, 2:175
 - Illuttmish, photograph of the tomb of, 2:175
 - Jalal-ud-Din Firuz Khalji, 2:175
 - Khalji dynasty, 2:175
 - Lodi dynasty (1451–1526), 2:176
 - Muhammad ibn Tughluq, 2:175
 - origins of, 2:174
 - overview of, 2:174–176
 - Qutb-ud-Din Aybak, 2:174
 - Raziyya, Sultana, 2:175
 - Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451), 2:176
 - slave dynasty, 2:174, 175
 - Tughluq dynasty, 2:175, 176
- The Devil's Horsemen* (Chambers), 2:69
- Dhikr*, 1:246
- Dhu al-Nun al-Misri, 1:245
- Dimaqsh Khwaja, 1:144
- Dimashq, 1:144
- Din, Rashid al-, 1:51
- Dobun Mergen, 2:4–5
- Dog, 2:131
- Dome of the Rock, 2:16
- Doquz Khatun (d. 1265)
- as a diplomatic touchstone for conquered Christian populations, 1:147
 - family of, 1:146
 - Hulegu and, 1:146
 - influence of, 1:146, 147
 - marriages of, 1:146
 - Muslims and, 1:146
 - Nestorian Christians and, 1:146, 147
 - overview of, 1:123, 146–147
 - reputation of, 1:94, 147
- Dorbei Doqshin, 1:203–204
- Dorben noqas* (four hounds), 2:90, 109
- Dore Temur (r. 1330–1331), 2:48
- Du'a, 1:72
- Du'a Soqor, 2:4
- Dual government
- arghun-aqa, 1:7
 - bichigchi* and *daruqachi*, 1:7
 - bodyguards, 1:6
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:6–7
 - clan, 1:6–7
 - duanshi guan*, 1:8
 - the *jarquchi*, 1:7, 8

- local terminology and, 1:7
 the *mingan*, 1:6
 in Mongol China, 1:8
 overview of, 1:2, 6–8
 pivot (*qol*) army, 1:6
sheng, 1:7
tumen, 1:6
xingsheng, 1:7
Yuan shi (History of the Yuan Dynasty), 1:8
Zhongshu ling, 1:7
 Duke Frederick V of Swabia, 2:172
 Durlukin tribes, 2:5
- Eastern Europe, invasion of, 2:109
 Eastern Mongols, 2:113
 Edgu-Temur, 1:102
 Edigu, 1:4, 25
 Elbeg Nigulesugchi, assassination of, 1:232
 Eleanor of Aquitaine, 2:171
 Eljigidei (r. 1327–1330), 2:48
 Esen Taishi (r. 1438–1454), 1:27
 Ethnic groups, overview of, 1:195
 See also specific groups
- Europe, invasion of (1240–1241)
 Baidar and Orda, 2:18, 19, 100, 101
 Battle of at Mohi (1241), 2:19
 Batu (fl. 1230–1255), 2:18
 Bela, 2:19
 calls for a crusade, 2:19–20
 Central Europe invasion, 2:18, 19
 conquest of Rus', 2:18
 Henry of Silesia (1238–1241), 2:18
 Holy Roman Empire, 2:19, 20
 Hungary, 2:18, 19, 20
 King Vaclav I (1230–1253), 2:18
 Liegnitz, 2:18
 overview of, 2:16–18
 Poland, 2:18
 Qadan, 2:19
 quriltai of 1234, 2:18
 Subedei, 2:19
 Thomas of Spalato on, 2:20
 trauma of, 2:18
- Fabian tactics, 2:111
 Fan Wanhu, 2:24
 Fatima, 1:52, 151, 170
 Felt, 2:121, 122
- Fire lance, 2:87
 Fireworks, 2:87
 First Council of Lyons (12.5), 2:17
 Five Snouts
 airag (kumiss), 2:132
 by-products, 2:131
 camel meat, 2:132
 camels, 2:131
 cattle, 2:130–131
 cows and yaks, 2:130
 the dog, 2:131
 felt, 2:131, 127
 gers (yurt), 2:131
 the horse, 2:130
 horses to pasture, 2:131
 khainag, a yak-cow, 2:130–131
 leather, 2:131
 milk, 2:132
 overview of, 2:121, 130–132
 sheep, 2:130
- Forest People
 Botoqui Tarqun, 1:203–204
 Buriyat Mongols, 1:202
 current status of, 1:202
 definition of, 1:202
 destruction of the Uyghur Khanate
 (744–840), 1:202
 Dorbei Doqshin and, 1:203–204
 Mongol conquest of, 1:202–203
 Naiman and, 1:227
 Oirat and, 1:202
 overview of, 1:202–204
 Qorchi and, 1:203
 Qorchi's prophecy and problem, 1:203
 Qori Tumed, 1:203
 tribes of, 1:202
 uprising of the Forest Peoples (1217–1218),
 1:203–204, 232
- Four Heroes, 1:90
 Franciscan Odoric of Pordenone, 1:205
 Franciscans
 Benedict the Pole, 1:204
 conversion of the Alan *keshigten*,
 1:205
 failure of Catholicism, 1:205
 Francis of Assisi (1182–1226), 1:204
 as the Friars Minor, 1:204
 Innocent III (Pope), 1:204

- Innocent IV (Pope), 1:204
 John of Monte Corvino, 1:205
 John of Plano Carpini, 1:204
 Nestorian Alans, 1:205
 overview of, 1:204–206
 William of Rubruck, 1:205
 Frederick I Barbarossa, 2:172, 198
 Frederick II, 2:16, 17, 173
 Fulk, 2:170
- Gaochang Uyghur kingdom, 1:253
 Gediminas (r. 1315–1341/1342), 2:190
 Geikhatu (r. 1291–1295), 1:16, 78
Gers (yurt), 2:131
 Ghazan (1271–1304, r. 1295–1304)
 administrative apparatus, the establishment
 of, 1:149
 conversion to Islam, image of, 2:34
 date and place of birth, 1:148
 death of, 1:149
 early life and education, 1:148
 economic reform and, 1:148
 family of, 1:148
 “Ghazan Leaves Tabriz” miniature, image
 of, 1:148
 Islam and, 1:148, 149
 Islamization of the Mongols, 2:255
Jami' al-Tawarikh (Compendium of
 Chronicles), 1:148
 legacy of, 1:149–150
 length of reign, 1:148
 letter to Pope Boniface VIII (April 1302),
 2:254–255
 Mongol and Islamic political thought,
 synthesizing of, 1:149
 Nowruz and, 1:149
 Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316) and, 1:173
 overview of, 1:122, 148–150
 Ghiyas-ud-Din Balban, 2:175
 Ghiyath al-Din, 1:160
 Ghurid dynasty (1011–1215), 2:183
 Gilles Li Muisis (d. 1352), 2:257
 Girei, 1:254
 Giyath al-Din Kaykhusraw (1237–1245),
 2:98
 Glossary, 2:263–267
 Goats, 2:122
 Godfrey of Bouillon (1100), 2:168
- Gok Turk Empire (568–630), 2:184
 Golden Horde
 alliance with the Mamluks, 2:191–192
 Altan Orda, 1:73
 Batu (1227–1255), 1:73, 74, 130
 Berke (1255–1267), 1:74
 Blue Horde and, 1:69
 Chinggis Khan (1165–1227), 1:73
 conversion to Islam, 1:74
 descendants of, 1:75
 expansion of the realm of, 1:73
 fragmentation of, 1:74
 golden age of, 1:74
 Jochi (fl. 1184–1225), 1:73
 Kipchak steppes and, 2:186
 Mamai, defeat of, 1:74
 Mongke Temur (1266–1279), 1:74
 Ogodei Khan, 1:73
 origin of the name, 74
 origin of the term, 1:69
 original lands of, 1:73
 overview of, 1:xx, 73–75
 rulers of, 2:260
 Russian principalities and, 1:74
 Toqtamysh, 1:74
 in Transcaucasia and Iran, 1:3
 Uzbek Khan, 1:74
- Gosset, 2:56
 Government and politics
 administration of, 1:7
 Almaliq, 1:2
 bodyguard establishment, 1:6, 8
 captials of, 1:2–3
 Chinggis Khan, 1:6–7
 cities of, 1:2–3
 civil war, 1:3
 Dadu, 1:4–6
 Daidu, 1:3
 Dayan divides his empire, 1:26
 dual government, 1:2, 6–8
 Edigu, 1:25
 Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), 1:1
 immigrant religions and Mongol China,
 1:13–15
 important events affecting, 1:3–4
 inadequacies of the Mongol government,
 1:1
inju, 1:15–17

- Karakorum, 1:2, 17–20
- Khubilai becomes khan (May 5, 1260), 1:3, 20–22
- Mongol Empire, dissolution of (1216), 1:3, 22–24
- Mongol-Chinese system of the *xingsheng*, 1:7
- New Sarai, 1:34
- Nogai (d. 1299), 1:24–26
- Northern Yuan (1368–1634), 1:26–29
- overview essay, 1:1–4
- Paiza*, 1:29–31
- quriltai*, 1:3, 4, 31–33
- religious toleration, 1:2
- Sarai, 1:2, 33–35
- shamanism, 1:35–37
- Shangdu, 1:37–39
- Sultaniyya, 1:39–41
- Tabriz, 1:3, 42–43
- Temur Khan (r. 1294–1307), 1:44–46
- terminology in, 1:7
- territorial claims, 1:3
- titles, 1:46–48
- Toghon Temur (r. 1333–1370), 1:4, 48–50
- Toregene, the wife of Ogodei, 1:1
- Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246), 1:51–52
- Uzbek Khan (1282–1341; r. 1313–1341), 1:53–55
- women in the court, 1:1–2, 55–57
- yasa*, 1:58–59
- Government structure
- altan urugh* (Golden Family), 1:8
- daruqachin*, 1:9
- Guyuk's election (1246), 1:10–13
- jarquchis* (provincial governors), 1:9
- the *keshik*, 1:9
- overview of, 1:8–10
- the *quriltai*, 1:8
- the *shis*, 1:9–10
- tanma* military units, 1:9
- Great Wall of China
- costs of, 2:134
- failures of, 2:133–134
- length of, 2:133
- manning of, 2:133
- Ming dynasty and, 2:132, 133–134
- overview of, 2:124, 132–134
- purpose of, 2:133
- Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE), 2:133
- Shang dynasty and, 2:133
- view from space, 2:134
- Gregory IX (Pope), 2:17
- Groups and organizations
- Alans (Asud), 1:194, 197–199
- the Assassins (1090–1256 CE), 1:196, 199–202
- Buddhism, 1:196
- commercial groups, 1:197
- ethnic groups, overview of, 1:195
- Forest People, 1:202–204
- Franciscans, 1:204–206
- Italians, 1:195, 206–209
- Jews, 1:196, 209–211
- Jurchen, 1:195, 212–213
- juyin*, 1:197, 214–215
- Kereit, 1:193–194, 215–217
- Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan), 1:195, 217–220
- Kipchaks, 1:194–195, 196, 220–222
- Mamluks, 1:196, 222–225
- Merkit, 1:194, 225–227
- miscellaneous groups, 1:196–197
- Naiman, 1:194, 227–229
- Nestorian Christians, 1:196, 229–231
- Oirat, 1:194, 231–233
- Onggirad, 1:194, 233–235
- Onggud, 1:194, 235–237
- ortoq* (*ortaq*, *ortagh*), 1:237–240
- other groups, 1:196–197
- overview essay, 1:193–196
- religious groups, overview of, 1:195–196
- Sakya Buddhists, 1:240–242
- Semuren, 1:197, 242–244
- Sufis, 1:244–247
- Tangut, 1:195, 247–249
- Tatars, 1:193, 249–251
- tribes, overview of, 1:193–194
- Uyghurs, 1:195, 251–253
- Uzbeks, 1:254–255
- White Lotus Buddhists, 1:255–257
- Guchulug, 1:228, 2:161, 181
- Gunpowder, 2:45
- accuracy and, 2:89
- bombs, 2:87
- cannon, 2:88
- explosive gunpowder, 2:88

- fire lance, 2:87
- fireworks, 2:87
- horse archer and, 2:89
- knowledge of, 2:88
- and Mongol military dominance, 2:89
- naptha, 2:88
- outside of China, 2:88
- overview of, 2:87–89
- rocket, 2:88
- thunder crash bombs, 2:88
- weaponized gunpowder, 2:64, 87, 88
- Gur-e Amir mausoleum, 2:194
- Gurèen*, 1:105
- Gur-khan*, 2:179–180
- Guyuk (r. 1246–1248)
 - accomplishments of, 1:151
 - Batu and, 1:130
 - death of, 1:130
 - dismissal of, 1:130
 - Fatima, execution of, 1:151, 52
 - generosity of, 1:151
 - image of, 1:151
 - importance of, 1:150
 - Mongol conquests, resumption of, 1:152
 - Nestorian Christian, 1:150
 - Oghul Qaimish, primary wife of, 1:150, 152
 - overview of, 1:1, 130, 150–153
 - personality of, 1:150
 - Qara Hulegu and, 1:153
 - religion and, 1:152
 - ruthlessness of, 1:151
 - sons of, 1:150
 - Temuge, 1:151
 - Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246), 1:150, 152
 - yam* passports, 1:151
 - Yesu Mongke and, 1:153
- Guyuk's election (1246)
 - Batu, 1:10, 1:11
 - Berke, 1:12
 - a challenge to the throne, 1:12
 - death of Ogodei, 1:10
 - Koten, 1:11
 - Malik Oghul, 1:12
 - Orda, 1:11
 - overview of, 1:10–13
 - Paul, 1:11
 - Shiremun, 1:11
 - taxation, 1:11
 - Temuge Otchigin, 1:12
 - Toregene, the wife of Ogodei, 1:1, 10
- Hambis, Louis, 2:152
- Han *cheriks*, 2:81–82
- Hard wheat, 2:147
- Hasan Kuchuk (Hasan the Lesser), 1:145
- Hasan Sabbah (d. 1124), 1:200
- Headgear, 2:129
- Hei Jun (Black Army), 2:82
- Henry of Champagne, 2:173
- Henry of Silesia (1238–1241), 2:18, 101
- Herbal medicine, 2:140
- Hethum, King of Cilicia (r. 1226–1269),
 - submission of
 - Abaqa and, 2:21
 - capture of Aleppo/Damascus, 2:21
 - clergy and taxation, 2:21
 - consequences of, 2:21
 - Hethum's relationship with the Mongols, 2:21
 - importance of Hethum, 2:21
 - on Jerusalem, 2:21
 - Kaykhusraw request for troops, 2:20
 - Leon and Thoros, 2:21
 - Mongke Khan, 2:21
 - new *jarliq* (decree) of Mongke Khan, 2:21
 - overview of, 2:20–22
 - submission to Baiju, 2:20
 - wisdom of voluntary submission, 2:20–21
- Hetum of Cilicia., 2:174
- Heṭum the Monk (d. 1310), 2:65, 66
- Hevajra Tantra*, 1:240–241
- Hoelun (d. ca. 1210)
 - abandonment of, 1:154, 2:58–59
 - adopted sons of, 1:154
 - Bekhter, murder of, 1:154
 - children of, 1:153–154
 - as an exemplar for Mongol women, 1:154
 - herbal medicine, 2:140
 - as the matriarch of the Chinggisid lineage, 1:153
 - Merkit grudge, 1:154
 - as model mother, 1:153
 - overview of, 1:122, 153–155
 - reputation of, 1:153
 - rescue of Qasar, 1:154
 - significance of, 1:154–155

- Temujin and, 1:154
 Yesugei and, 1:153, 2:58
 Holy Roman Empire, 2:16, 17, 19–20
 Hong Tagu, 2:24
 Horse
 horses to pasture, 2:131, 135
 overview of, 2:135–137
 saddle and other equipment, 2:137
 sources for, 2:135
 tanmachi and, 1:98–99
 trading and selling, 2:137
 training, 2:135, 136
 Hounds, steeds, and Paladins, 2:109
 Hu Sihui, 2:156
Huihui yaofang (Muslim Medicinal Recipes), 2:12
 Huisi (515–576), 1:256
 Huiwen, 1:255
 Hulegu (1217–1265)
 against the Abbasid Caliphate, 1:156
 at Aleppo, 1:156
 the Assassins and, 1:155–156
 assessment of, 1:157
 Baghdad, siege of (1258), 2:73–74
 Berke and, 1:157
 Doquz Khatun (d. 1265) and, 1:146
 family of, 1:155
 Il-Khanate, 1:75–76
 image of, 1:156
 letter to King Louis IX of France (1262), 2:236
 Mongol Empire, dissolution of, 1:22, 23
 overview of, 1:122, 155–157
 Tabriz and, 1:42
 Hungary, 2:18, 19, 102–104
 Hungary loses allies, 2:104
 Huns (ca. 395–500 CE), 2:184
 Hunting, 2:110
 Ibaqa, as a gift, 2:40
 Ibn Alqami, 2:72–74
 Ibn al-Athir, 2:215–217
 Ibn Battuta (1304–1369)
 Berber Marinid (1244–1465) dynasty, 1:158
 at the court of the Tarmashirin, 1:158
 date and place of birth, 1:157
 Delhi Sultanate, 1:158
 legal training, 1:158
 Muhammad Tughluq (r. 1325–1351), 1:158
 mystical Islam, 1:158
 overview of, 1:124, 157–159
 Rihla (Book of Travels), 1:158, 159
 in Tangier, 1:158
 travels of, 1:157–158
 Ilghazi of Mardin, 2:170
 Il-khan Hulegu (r. 1256–1265), 2:126
 Il-Khanate
 Abu Said Bahadur Khan (r. 1318–1335), 1:76
 administration of, 1:76
 administrative and economic center of, 1:76
 artistic and literary efflorescence, 1:76
 collapse of, 1:76
 culture and the il-khans, 1:77
 definition of term, 1:75
 founders of, 1:122
 Hulegu (d. 1265) and, 1:75–76
 instability in, 1:76
 Islam as a state religion, 2:3
 Khubilai Khan, recognition of, 1:3
 location of, 1:75
 Mongke (r. 1251–1259), 1:74
 Nizari Ismailis, 1:75
 Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), 1:175
 overview of, 1:xx, 75–77
 rulers of, 2:259–260
 Tabriz and, 1:76
 Trebizond and, 2:201
 tribute payment, 1:76
 Ilututnish, 2:175
 Ilututnish, photograph of the tomb of, 2:175
 Immigrant religions in Mongol China
 Christianity, 1:14
 Islam, 1:13–14
 Inalchuq (d. 1219), 2:35–36
 Inancha Bilge Khan, 1:227
 Individuals
 Abaqa (r. 1265–1282), 1:124–126
 Abu Said (r. 1317–1335), 1:126–129
 Batu (1203–1255), 1:122, 129–131
 Baybars I (1223–1277), 1:123, 131–134
 Borte (ca. 1161–1230), 1:134–135
 Chabi Khatun (d. 1281), 1:136–137
 Chagatai Khan (d. 1242), 1:123, 138–140
 Chinggis Khan (1164–1227), 1:140–143

- Chinggis Khan, sons of, 1:121
 Choban (d. 1327), 1:143–145
 Doquz Khatun (d. 1265), 1:123, 146–147
 Ghazan (1271–1304, r. 1295–1304), 148–150
 Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), 1:150–153
 Hoelun (d. ca. 1210), 1:153–155
 Hulegu (1217–1265), 1:155–157
 Ibn Battuta (1304–1369), 1:124, 157–159
 the il-khans, 1:122
 Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah (r. 1221–1230),
 1:123, 159–162
 Jochi (d. 1225), 1:162–164
 Khubilai Khan (1215–1294), 1:164–166
 Mongke Khan (1209–1259, r. 1251–1259),
 1:166–169
 Mongol khatuns (queens), 1:122–123
 number of khans, 1:121
 Oghul Qaimish Khatun (d. 1251), 1:169–171
 Ogodei Khan (1186–1241), 1:171–173
 Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), 1:173–176
 Orghina Khatun (d. 1261), 1:123, 176–178
 overview essay, 1:121–124
 Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324), 1:178–180
 Qaidu (1230–1301), 1:180–183
 Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252), 1:123, 183–186
 Timur-i Leng (1336–1405), 1:124, 186–188
 Tolui Khan (1191–1232), 1:189–190
 Toqtamysh (d. 1406), 1:191–192
 Uzbek Khan, 1:122
- Indonesia, 2:188
- Inju*
dalay and, 1:16
 definition of the term, 1:15
 distinction between *dalay* and *inju*, 1:16
 grants of *inju* land, 1:15
 overview of, 1:15–17
qubi land distribution, 1:15
qubi landholdings, 1:15–16
 transmission and management of *inju* land,
 1:16
tunluq property classification, 1:16
- Inner Mongolia, 2:25
 Inner Mongolian *tanma*, 2:112, 113
 Innocent III (Pope)
 Francis of Assisi, 1:204
 Principality of Antioch, 2:173
 Innocent IV (Pope)
 Baiju and, 1:68
 crusade against the Mongols, 2:17
 John of Plano Carpini, 1:204, 2:29
 Intellectual achievement, 2:123–124
 Irtysh River, Battle of the (1209)
 Chila'un, 2:90, 91
 impact of Naiman and Merkit, 2:90
 Jebe (Jirqo'adai), 2:90
 Merkit, 2:90–91
 the Naiman, 1:228
 the Naiman and Merkit, 2:89–90
 overview of, 2:89–91
 Qaidu, 1:183
 Qutu, 2:90
 significance of, 2:89, 91
- Isa the translator (d. early 14th century), 2:141
- Islam
 overview of, 1:13–14
 as a state religion, 2:3
See also Mongol conversion to Islam;
 Muslims
- Islamization of the Mongols, 2:255
- Ismail, 1:255
- Italians
 family of Marco Polo (1254–1324), 1:207
 Genoa and Venice trading, 1:206, 207, 208
 Mongols' relations with Genoa and Venice,
 1:207–208
 overview of, 1:196, 206–209
 Polo sailing from Venice in 1271 (painting),
 1:208
 slave trade, 1:207
 trading networks of, 1:207
 wars between the Il-Khanate and the
 Mamluk Sultanate, 1:207
- Ivanovich, Dmitri, 2:29–30, 31
- Izz al-Din, Malik, 2:73, 74
- Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah (r. 1221–1230)
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:159–160
 conquests of, 1:160
 defeat of, 1:160–161, 2:183
 and the expansion of the medieval world,
 1:160–161
 in India, 1:160
 Kirman and Fars vassals, 1:160
 murder of, 1:160
 overview of, 1:123, 159–162
 pursuit of Jalal al-Din, 1:161

- requests help against the Mongols (ca. 1230),
2:225
- Sufi mystical poetry, 1:247
- Jalal-ud-Din Firuz Khalji, 2:175
- Jalayir Mongol Muqali (d. 1223), 2:112
- Jami'at al-Tawarikh* (Compendium of
Chronicles), 1:148, 2:123
- Jamuqa, 2:59, 80, 125
- Janibek, 1:254
- Japan, invasion of (1274, 1280)
depiction of, 2:23
Fan Wanhu, 2:24
Hakata Bay, 2:24
Hong Tagu, 2:24
Khubilai Khan, 2:22–23, 24
Korea, 2:24
of November 1274, 2:23
overview of, 2:22–25
samurai, 2:24
second invasion of, 2:24
- Jarquchi*, 1:7, 8, 9
- Java, invasion of (1292–1293)
Chinese versus Java sources on, 2:93
civil war and, 2:92
Javanese sources on, 2:92, 93
Kertnagara (King), 2:92
Khubilai Khan (1215–1294) and, 2:
91–92, 93
overview of, 2:91–93
relations with Java, 2:92
relationship between Java and Khubilai's
China, 2:92
submission to the Mongols, 2:92
Wiraraja (King), 2:92, 93
- Jebe (Jirqo'adai), 2:90, 95, 108
- Jerome (Saint), 2:12
- Jerusalem, 1:161, 2:16, 21, 43
- Jews
Jewish sources on the Mongols, 1:210
kosher, eating, 1:211
lost tribes of Israel, 1:209
methods of slaughtering animals, 1:211
Mongol invasions and conquests, 1:210
Mongol use of, 1:210
Mongol view of, 1:209–210
the Mongols and the Jewish community in
Armenia, 1:209
overview of, 1:196, 209–211
- practical influence of the Jews in the Mongol
Empire, 1:211
- Rabbi Nissim of Marseilles, 1:210
- Rabbi Yossef ben Kasp, 1:210
- Jia Jinyan, 2:152
- Jia Sidao, 2:196
- Jin Empire (1125–1234)
Aguda (1068–1123), 2:176
Altan Khan (Golden Khan) name, 2:176
depiction of a battle between the Mongol
and Jin Jurchen armies, 2:177
founder of, 2:176
Jurchen, 2:176, 178–179
juyin peoples, 2:177, 178
Khitan capitals, 2:176
Mongol defeat of, 2:177–178
overview of, 2:161–162, 176–179
population of, 2:177
the raw and the cooked, 2:178
rebellion in, 2:177
Song Empire wars, 2:177
split in, 2:177
survival of, 2:178
tribute to Chinggis Khan, 1: xv
written language of, 2:178
Wu-ku-sun Chung Tuan's account of his
embassy to Chinggis Khan (ca. 1220),
2:222–223
Zhangzong (r. 1189–1208), 2:177
- Jin Empire, fall of the (1234)
description of the Jin Empire, 2:25
impact on Mongols, 2:26
Jurchen tribesmen, 2:25
Kaifeng, siege of (1233), 2:25, 93–95
Mongol raids of, 2:25
Ogodei Khan, 2:26
overview of, 2:25–27
Subedei, 2:26
Zhongdu, 2:26, 211, 212
- Jingim (1243–1286), 1:44, 137
- Jochi (d. 1225)
animosity between Chagatai and Jochi, 1:163
father of, 1:162
Jochid Ulus, 1:163
Khwarazmian campaign, 1:162, 163
marriages of, 1:163
as military commander, 1:162–163
name of, 1:162

- Ogodei and, 1:163
 overview of, 1:162–164
 sons of, 1:163
 at Urgench, 1:163
- Jochi Qasar, 1:140, 2:7, 52
- Jochid Ulus, 2:186
- John II Comnenus, 2:171
- John of Monte Corvino, 1:205
- John of Plano Carpini, journey of (1180–1252)
 departure date, 2:27
 description of the Mongol armor (1240s),
 2:226–227
 description of the Mongols (1240s),
 2:225–226
- Guyuk and, 2:28
 lamentations of, 2:28
 letter from Guyuk Khan to Pope Innocent
 IV, image of, 2:28
 military affairs, 2:29, 68
 mission of, 1:204, 2:2, 27
 on *onggon*, 2:145
 overview of, 2:27–29
 selection of, 2:27
 significance of, 2:28, 29
 on *tenggeri*, 2:153
 view of non-Christians, 2:29
*Ystoria Mongalorum (History of the
 Mongols)*, 2:27
- John of Sarrasin, 2:227
- Joscelin II of Edessa, 2:171
- Jurchedei and Chinggis Khan, 2:40
- Jurchen
 Aizong Wanyan Shouxu, 1:213
 alternative name for, 1:212
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:213
 distribution of, 1:213
 divide and rule policy of, 1:213
 groupings of, 1:212
 Jin Empire and, 2:176, 178–179
 language of, 1:212
 Liao-Jin struggle, 1:212
 location of, 1:212
 military system of, 1:213
 Mongol-Song joint military operation, 1:213
 overview of, 1:197, 212–213
 the raw and the cooked, 2:178
 Song Empire and, 2:196
 tribes of, 1:214
- Wanyans and, 1:212
 war against the Song dynasty, 1:213
- Juyin*
 allegiance of, 1:214–215
 armies, 2:113
 changes in, 1:214
 Chinggis Khan, 1:214, 215
 definition of, 1:214
 Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE), 1:214
 the Onggud, 1:214, 236
 overview of, 1:197, 214–215
 purpose of, 1:214
 rebellion by the *juyin* tribes, 1:214
 Tatars, 1:214
- Juzjani, 2:218–219
- Kaffa in the Crimea, 2:9–10, 257
- Kaifeng, siege of (1233)
 effect of, 2:95
 location of, 2:94
 overview of, 2:93–95
 precipitating events, 2:93–94
 siege engineers, 2:63
 Song alliance, 2:94
 Subedei and, 2:94–95
 Zhongdu, destruction of, 2:94
- Kaixi War (1205–1208), 2:196
- Kalka River, Battle of the (1223)
 consequences of, 2:97
 description of, 2:96–97
 Jebe (Jirqoʻadai), 2:95
 Mstislavich, Mstislav, 2:96, 97
 overview of, 2:95–97
 precipitating events, 2:96
 Romanovich, Mstislav, 2:97
 Russian survivors of, 2:97
 significance of, 2:95
 Subedei, 2:95, 109
- Kammala, 1:44
- Kara Khitai (1125–1218)
 Atsiz, 2:180
 Battle of Khujand, 2:180
 Battle of Qatwan, 2:180
 “black” Khitai, 2:181
 date created, 2:179
 decline of, 2:181
 establishment of, 2:179
 Guchulug and, 2:181

- Guchulug and the Naiman, 2:162
gur-khan, 2:179–180
 influence of, 2:180
 Khwarazmian Empire and, 2:182
 Liao dynasty, 2:179
 Mawarannahr, 2:180
 Muslims and, 2:180–181
 mystery of the name, 2:181
 Nestorian Christianity, 1:228
 overview of, 2:161, 162, 179–182
 Qarakhanid, 2:180
 religiosity of, 2:180
 religious tolerance, 2:180
 Sanjar, Sultan, 2:180
 Uyghuristan, 2:91
 Uyghurs and, 1:253
 Western Liao Empire, 2:176
 Yelu Dashi, 2:179–180
- Karabalghasun, 1:252
- Karachi beg*
 alternative name for, 1:77
 antecedents to, 1:78
 Atwood, Christopher, on, 1:78
bash karachi, or *beylerbeyi*, 1:78
 as a conservative element within the Crimean Khanate, 1:78
 definition of, 1:77
 influence of, 1:78
 leading *karachi begs* of the Crimean Khanate, 1:77
 origins of, 1:78
 others having influence over the khan, 1:79
 overview of, 1:77–79
 Saʿadat Giray Khan, 1:78
 Sahib Giray, 1:78–79
 the term *qarachu* (*karachi*), 1:78
- Karakalpakstan, 1:255
- Karakorum
 commercial districts, 1:18–19
 decline of, 1:19
 location of, 1:17
 Ogodei's commercial policy, 1:19
 Orkhon River Basin, 1:17
 Orkhon River Valley, photograph of, 1:17
 overview of, 1:2, 17–20
 use of, 1:18
 William of Rubruck on, 1:18
- Karamzin, N. M., 2:50
- Kay-Khusraw I, 2:199
 Kay-Khusraw II, 2:199
 Kay-Qubadh I (1220–1237), 2:199
 Kazghan, 1:86
 Kebek Khan (1319–1327), 1:86
 Kebek Khan (r. 1320–1327), 2:48
- Kereit
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:216
 conversion of Sariq Khan, 1:216
 location of, 1:215–216
 Naiman, 1:216
 Nestorian Christians and, 1:215
 overview of, 1:193–194, 215–217
 Qurjaqus, 1:216
 raids of, 1:216
 Sariq Khan, 1:216
 success of, 1:216
 Temujin, 1:216
 ToghriI, 1:216
 Yeusgei, 1:216
- Kertnagara (King), 2:92, 93
- Keshik* (bodyguard)
 benefits of, 1:80
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:79, 80, 81
 divisions of, 1:80–81
 founding of, 1:80
 government structure and, 1:9
 guarding the khan, 1:80
 hostages, 1:80
 number of, 1:79
 origin of, 1:79
 overview of, 1:79–81
quriltai of 1206 and, 2:40
 recruitment methods, 1:80
 size of, 1:81
 tasks of, 1:79–80
 as a training school for the Mongol Army, 1:80
- Ket Buqa
 against the Assassins, 1:155–156
 at Ayn Jalut, 1:156, 2:71
 Baghdad, siege of (1258), 2:73, 74
 Damascus, capture of, 1:156
 as a Naiman, 1:228
tumen of, 2:70
- Key events
 Alan Goa and the arrow parable, 2:4–6
 Baljuna Covenant (1203), 2:6–8

- Black Death (mid-14th century), 2:8–11
- Chinggis Exchange, 2:11–13
- Chinggis Khan, death of (1227), 2:13–15
- crusades against the Mongols (1241, 1249), 2:16–18
- Europe, invasion of (1240–1241), 2:18–20
- Hethum, King of Cilicia (r. 1226–1269), submission of, 2:20–22
- Japan, invasion of (1274, 1280), 2:22–25
- Jin Empire, fall of the (1234), 2:25–27
- John of Plano Carpini, journey of (1180–1252), 2:27–29
- Kulikovo Pole, Battle of (1380), 2:29–32
- Mongol conversion to Islam, 2:32–35
- Nirū'un, Durlukin, and social structure, 2:6
- Otrar Massacre (1218), 2:35–37
- overview essay, 2:1–4
- Peace of Qatwan (1267), 2:37–39
- Rabban Sawma, mission of (1286–1288), 2:41–44
- Red Turban Revolt (1340s–1368), 2:44–46
- Shiremun's Coup (1250), 2:46–48
- Tarmashirin, overthrow of (1334), 2:48–50
- Tatar Yoke, 2:50–52
- Teb Tenggeri, death of (1206), 2:52–54
- Toluid Revolution (1250), 2:54–56
- William of Rubruck, journey of (1253–1255), 2:56–57
- Yesugei, death of (ca. 1174/1175), 2:58–60
- Key places
- Abbasid Caliphate (750–1258), 2:164–167
- Antioch, Principality of, 2:167–174
- Delhi Sultanate, 2:174–176
- Jin Empire (1125–1234), 2:161, 176–179
- Kara Khitai (1125–1218), 2:161, 162, 179–182
- Khwarazmian Empire (1097–1224), 2:162, 163, 182–184
- Kipchak steppes, 2:162, 184–186
- Koryo (935–1392), 2:163, 187–188
- Lithuania, 2:164, 189–190
- Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517), 2:164, 191–192
- overview essay, 2:161–164
- Samarkand, 2:193–195
- Song Empire (960–1279), 2:163, 195–197
- Sultanate of Rum, 2:197–200
- Transcaucasia, 2:163
- Trebizond, 2:163, 200–202
- Uyghuristan, 2:161, 202–204
- Xi Xia (1038–1227), 2:161, 204–206
- Xiangyang, siege of (1267–1273), 2:163, 206–208
- Yunnan, 2:163, 208–210
- Zhongdu, 2:162, 210–213
- Khalji dynasty, 2:175
- Khanate of the Great Khan, 1:xx
- Khidan jun* (Khitan Army), 2:82
- Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan)
- Abaoji (r. 907–927), 1:217–218
- Aguda (1068–1123), 1:219
- assimilation of, 1:219
- Chinggis Khan, 1:219
- Deguano (927–947), 1:218
- Khubilai Khan, 1:219
- language, rise and fall of, 1:220
- the Liao, 1:219
- origin of, 1:217
- overview of, 1:195, 217–220
- “A Rest-Stop for the Khitan Khan” (image), 1:218
- Song war, 1:218
- Yelu Dashi, 1:219
- Khitan Liao dynasty (907–1125), 2:195
- Khitan Xiao Chala, 2:82
- Khitan Yelu Chucai, 1:84
- Khubilai, 1:3, 22, 23
- Khubilai, Prince, 2:209
- Khubilai becomes khan (May 5, 1260)
- Alghu, 1:21
- Ariq Boke, 1:20, 21
- Chinese support, 1:21
- death of Mongke Khan, 1:20
- interception of supplies, 1:21
- overview of, 1:3, 20–22
- Polo, Marco, 1:20
- yasa* and, 1:58
- Khubilai Khan (1215–1294)
- administration of his empire, 1:165–166
- Ariq Boke, 1:71, 115, 164
- Battle of Kediri, 1:165
- Blue Horde, 1:70
- brothers of, 1:164
- calendar, 2:126
- capitals of, 1:3
- Chagatai Khanate and, 1:3

- conquest of southern China and the Song dynasty, 1:164
- fame of, 1:164, 166
- Golden Horde and, 1:164
- heaven and, 2:154
- Il-Khanate and, 1:164
- image of, 1:165
- invasions of, 1:165
- Japan, invasion of (1274, 1280), 2:23–24
- Java, invasion of (1292–1293), 2:91–92, 93
- Java, submission of, 1:165
- Karakorum, 1:3, 38
- Khitan (Kitan, Qitan, Qidan), 1:219
- Koryo (935–1392), 2:187, 188
- Mongol Empire of, 1:164
- Mubarak Shah and, 1:71
- ordos*, 1:93
- ortoqs and, 1:239
- overseas ventures, 1:165
- overview of, 1:164–166
- parents of, 1:164
- Qaidu, 1:164–165
- Qonichi, 1:70
- quriltai*, 1:3
- Shangdu, 1:37, 38
- Siktur and, 1:95
- Song Empire (960–1279), 2:196
- writing systems, 1:64, 109
- yam (jam)* system, 1:111
- Yuan dynasty, 2:44
- Yuan Empire and, 1:115–116
- Yuan Empire reforms, 1:31
- Khurasan
- Abaqa and, 1:82
- Baraq and, 1:82
- civil government of, 1:82
- as a contested frontier, 1:82
- as a fertile ground for rebellion, 1:83
- Greater Khurasan, 1:81
- importance of, 1:83
- invasions of, 1:82–83
- Jalal al-Din Khwarazmshah, 1:81, 82
- Khwarazmian Empire and, 1:81–82
- location of, 1:81
- overview of, 1:81–83
- significance of, 1:81
- Tolui's campaign in, 1:82
- as a training ground for princes, 1:82, 83
- Khwarazmian Empire (1097–1224)
- Anushtigin Gharchai, 2:181
- Arslan Atsiz Khwarazmshah (r. 1127–1156), 2:182
- Atsiz, 2:182
- destruction of, 2:35
- Jalal al-Din, 2:183
- Kara Khitai, 2:182
- Khurasan and, 1:181–182
- Khwarazm region, 2:182
- Khwarazmians, 2:35, 181
- Kipchak tribes, 2:182
- Mongol invasion of, 2:162–163, 183
- Muhammad II Khwarazmshah (r. 1200–1220), 2:183
- Otrar Massacre and, 2:183
- overview of, 2:162, 163, 182–184
- Seljuk Sultan Sanjar (r. 1118–1153), 2:182, 183
- significance of, 2:61, 163
- Urgench, capital of, 2:181
- Khwarazmshahs, 2:142, 182–183
- Kill zones, 2:111
- King Bela IV (1235–1270), 2:19
- King Philip IV (1285–1314), 2:43
- King Vaclav I (1230–1253), 2:18
- Kingdom of Jerusalem, 2:16
- Kipchak steppes
- alternative names for, 2:184
- Avars (558–796), 2:184
- commercial activities in, 2:186
- destabilization of, 2:186
- Gok Turk Empire (568–630), 2:184
- Golden Horde and, 2:186
- Huns (ca. 395–500 CE), 2:184
- Jochid Ulus, 2:186
- Kipchak Khanate, 2:186
- the Kipchaks, 2:184
- Kipchaks, first migrations of, 2:185
- location of, 2:184
- Mongols and, 2:185–186
- overview of, 2:162, 184–186
- photograph of, 2:185
- Qanglis, 2:184
- Scythians (ca. 1200 BCE–300 CE), 2:184
- Second Turkic Empire (682–731), 2:184
- supratribal/confederation zones, 2:185
- Timur-i Leng and, 2:186

Kipchaks

- the Alans and, 1:197, 2:96
- confederations of, 1:221
- as Mamluks, 1:196
- marriage alliances, 1:221
- military alliances, 1:221
- Mongol's defeat of, 1:222, 2:96–97
- names for, 1:220
- origin of, 1:220–221
- overview of, 1:194–195, 220–222
- religions of, 1:221–222
- Robert of Clari's description of the Kipchaks (ca. 1205), 2:218
- the Rus' and, 1:221
- shamanism, 1:221

Kitab al-Qanun fi-Tibb (Canon of Medicine) of Ibn Sina (d. 1037), 2:156

- Knights Hospitaller, 2:172, 173
- Knights Templars, 2:101, 173, 174
- Ko'agchin, 1:140
- Koke Mongke Tenggeri (Blue Eternal Sky), 2:122
- Konchog Gyalpo (1034–1102), 1:240
- Korea, 2:24, 163
- Korean Buddhism, 2:187
- Korghuz, 1:237
- Korguz, 1:102
- Koryo (935–1392)

- cartography, 2:188
- distillation, 2:188
- foreign invasions, 2:187
- Khubilai Khan and, 2:187, 188
- Korea and, 2:187
- Korean Buddhism, 2:187
- Korean girls, 2:187
- Korean national dress, 2:188
- Mongol food influences, 2:188
- Mongol invasion of, 2:187
- Mongol rule in Korea, 2:187–188
- overview of, 2:163, 187–188
- the *yangban* (Korean civilian elite), 2:187
- Yuan dynasty and, 2:187

Kose Dagh, Battle of (1243)

- consequences of, 2:97, 98, 99
- description of, 2:98
- Giyath al-Din Kaykhusraw, 2:98
- overview of, 2:97–99
- Seljuk Sultanate of Rum and, 2:97, 98

Koten Khan

- alliances with the Russians, 2:96
- conversion to Buddhism, 1:241
- illness of, 1:11
- murder of, 2:103, 104
- Ogodei Khan and, 1:11, 172

Kulikovo Pole, Battle of (1380)

- Andreevich, Vladimir, 2:30
- Ivanovich, Dmitri, 2:29–30, 31
- Mamai, 2:29, 30–31
- Muscovy, liberation of, 2:31
- overview of, 2:29–32
- Toqtamysh (d. 1406), 2:30–31

Kumiss

- as a cure-all, 2:139
- current consumption of, 2:139
- definition of, 2:137
- the drinking fountain, 2:139
- fermentation of, 2:137
- health benefits, 2:139
- overview of, 2:121, 137–140
- photograph of, 2:138
- production of, 2:138, 139
- sharing of, 2:138
- uses of, 2:137–138
- William of Rubruck on, 2:138, 139

Kupalak, 1:70

La flor des estoires de la terre d'Orient (The Flower of Histories of the Land of the East), 2:66

- Language, rise and fall of, 1:220
- Latter Tang (923–935), 1:235
- Leather, 2:131
- Leon II of Cilicia, 2:173
- Leon of Cilicia (r. 1269–1289), 2:21
- Les Chetifs*, 2:171
- Li Bingzhong, 1:4
- Li Tan, 2:82
- Li Yuanhao, 2:205
- Liao dynasty, 2:179
- Liao Empire (965–1125), 1:195
- Liegnitz, Battle of (1241)
- Baidar and, 2:100
- Baidar and Orda, 2:100, 101
- combatants in, 2:99
- consequences of, 2:102
- description of, 2:101–102

- Henry II of Silesia, forces of, 2:101
 illustration of, 2:100
 miners on the move, 2:102
 overview of, 2:99–102
 precipitating events, 2:100
 Teutonic Knights, 2:101
- Lithuania
 Catholicism, 2:189
 expansion of, 2:189, 190
 foundations for Lithuania's rise, 2:189
 Gediminas (r. 1315–1341/1342), 2:190
 Golden Horde and, 2:189, 164, 190
 Grand Duchy of Lithuania, 2:189
 Kiev, 2:189, 190
 Mindaugas (r. 1238–1263), 2:189
modus vivendi of, 2:190
 overview of, 2:164, 189–190
 Polotsk, 2:189
 Teutonic Knights, 2:190
 Traidenis (r. 1270–1282), 2:189
 Vytenis (r. 1295–1315), 2:189
- Lithuanian Tatars, 1:192
- Lodi dynasty (1451–1526), 2:176
- Lombard expedition in the Crusade of 1101, 2:169
- Lord of Fire, *onggon* of the, 2:146
- Louis IX (King) of France, 2:56, 233–234, 236
- Magas, 1:197
- Magas, destruction of, 1:198
- Mahmud Yalavach (d. ca. 1262)
 Bujir and, 1:84
 conclusion concerning, 1:85
 death of, 1:84
 importance of, 1:13, 62, 83
 as *jarquchi*, 1:84
 as a Muslim, 1:13, 14
 name of, 1:83
 overview of, 1:13, 83–85
 praise for, 1:84
 reforms of, 1:100
 taxation system and, 1:11, 100
- Maitreya Buddha, 1:256
- Majd al-Mulk, 1:125
- Malik Oghul, 1:12
- Mamai, 1:74, 2:29, 30–31
- Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517)
 Al Salih Ayyubi (r. 1240–1249), 2:191
 alliance with the Golden Horde, 2:191–192
 authority of, 2:191
 the Bahriyya, 2:191
 border of, 2:191
 creation of, 1:223
 dissolution of, 2:192
 King Louis (r. 1226–1270), 2:191
 overview of, 2:164, 191–192
 Qutuz, 2:191
 regicide, 2:192
 slaves from the Mongol conquest, 2:191
- Mamluks
 at Acre, 1:224
 Army, 1:224
 Battle of Ayn Jalut, 1:223, 2:70–72
 Battle of La Forbie, 1:223
 Baybars I (1223–1277), 1:131, 224
 cavalry of, 1:223
 against the crusaders, 1:224
 defeat by Selim the Grim, 1:224
 definition of, 1:131, 222
 ending of the institution, 1:225
 Islam and, 1:222
 Kipchaks as, 1:196
 Mamluk (slave) institution, 1:222
 Mamluk Sultanate (1250–1517), 1:223
 martial prowess of, 1:224
 against the Mongols, 1:224
 Muhammad Ali and, 1:225
 Mutasim and, 1:223
 overview of, 1:194, 222–225
 as part of the Ottoman Empire, 1:225
 as a praetorian guard, 1:223
 purchase of, 1:222
 purpose of, 1:222
 Qutuz, 1:223–224
 Seventh Crusade, 1:223
 slavery and, 1:222
- Manglai* and *gejige*, 2:66
- Manichaeism, 1:252
- Manuel I Comnenus, 2:171, 172
- Maps
 Asian in 1334, 1:xxii
 Eurasia before the rise of the Mongol Empire (1206), 1:xvi
 Mongol world, ca. 1260, 1:xx
 Timur's Empire, ca. 1405, 1:xxiii
 travels of Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta, 1:xxi

- Mar Denha, 2:42
 Mar Yaballaha, 1:175, 2:42
 Mar Yahba Allah (1245–1317), 2:255–256
 Markos (1245–1317), 2:41–42, 238
 Mas'ud Beg, 2:37–36
 Maurice of Porto, 2:169
 Mawarannahr
 acquisition of, 1:86
 alternative name for, 1:85
 as center of warfare, 1:86
 Chagatai Khan and, 1:86
 Chagatai Khanate and, 1:86
 Chagatayids and, 1:86
 Chin-Temur, 1:86
 definition of, 1:85
 description by Yelu Chucai, 2:224
 Il-Khanid invasion of 1270, 1:86
 importance of, 2:49
 Kazghan, 1:86
 Kebek Khan (1319–1327), 1:86
 location of, 1:85
 Otrar Massacre (1218), 1:86, 2:183
 overview of, 1:85–87
 Qaidu, 1:86
 Tughluk Temur Khan, 1:86
 Mawlawiyah *tariqa*, 1:246
 Medical exchanges, 2:12
 Medicine
 Arabic medicine, 2:141
 Bi-chi, 2:140
 Chinese medicine, 2:141
 Chinggis Khan and, 2:140
 dietary medicine of the Mongol court, 2:140
 dissection, 2:141
 Greek medicine, 2:141
 herbal medicine, 2:140
 Huihui yaofang (Muslim Medicinal Recipes), 2:141
 Isa the translator (d. early 14th century), 2:141
 overview of, 2:123, 142–144
 Tanksuq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'ulum-i khitay (Treasure Book of the Il-Khans on the Sciences and Learning of China), 2:140–141
 Tibetan medical practitioners, 2:140
 Yinshan zhengyao (proper and essential things for the emperor's food and drink) (1330), 2:140
 Mehmet I, 2:67
 Merkit
 alliance with the Naiman, 1:226
 at the Battle of Chakirmaut, 1:226
 at the Battle of the Irtysh River, 1:226
 Bayan, 1:227
 Borte kidnapping, 1:226
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:225, 226
 Dayir Usun, 1:227
 defeat at the Ulagh Tagh, 2:80
 first mention of, 1:225
 as the Gurvan Merkit (Three Merkit), 1:225
 Hoelun, 1:225
 Kara Khitai, hostility toward, 1:225
 Nestorian Christianity, 1:225
 Oghul Qaimish, 1:226
 overview of, 1:194, 225–227
 Qulan Khatun, 1:226–227
 rules for marriage, 1:226
 submission of, 1:226
 Temujin and, 1:226
 territory of, 1:225
 Toluid Revolution, 1:226
 Toqtoa Beki, 1:226
 Yesugei and, 1:225
 Methods of slaughtering animals, 1:211
 Me'ujin Se'ultu, 1:250
 Military
 alginchin, 2:62, 64–66
 Ankara, Battle of (1402), 2:67–68
 armament, manufacturing of, 2:63
 armor, 2:68–70
 Ayn Jalut, Battle of (1260), 2:70–72
 Baghdad, siege of (1258), 2:63, 72–75
 battle tactics and strategies, 2:61–62
 Caizhou, siege of (1233–1234), 2:75–77
 cannon, 2:77–79
 Chakirmaut, Battle of (1204), 2:79–81
 cherik troops, 2:81–83
 cheriks, 2:62
 Chinggis Khan and, 2:61–62
 contagious diseases, 2:61
 counterweight trebuchets, 2:63, 106, 114, 115, 208, 237
 formations of the Mongols, 2:80
 gejige (follow up), 2:66
 gunpowder, 2:63–64, 87–89
 Irtysh River, Battle of the (1209), 2:89–91

- Java, invasion of (1292–1293), 2:91–93
 Kaifeng, siege of (1233), 2:93–95
 Kalka River, Battle of the (1223), 2:95–97
 Kose Dagh, Battle of (1243), 2:97–99
 Liegnitz, Battle of (1241), 2:99–102
manglai (lit. “forehead”), 2:66
 Mohi, Battle of (April 1241), 2:102–105
 Muscovy, 2:64
 overview essay, 2:61–64
 siege warfare, 2:61, 63, 105–107
 study of Mongol military, 2:64
 Subedei (1176–1248), 2:107–110
 Syrian defeat of the Mongols, 2:71, 72
 tactics, 2:110–111
tanma, 2:62, 112–113
tanmachi, 2:62, 65–66, 113
 trebuchet, 2:63, 114–116
 tsunami strategy, 2:63, 116–118
 weapon technology, 2:61, 63–64
 weapons, 2:118–120
See also Battle
- Mindaugas (r. 1238–1263), 2:189
 Ming dynasty, 2:45
Mingan, 1:6, 105
 Miniature paintings, 1:77
 Mi-nyag, 1:247
Mithqal, 2:144
Mochalga, 1:31
 Moge Khatun, 1:10
 Mogetuken, 1:139
 Moghul Empire (1526–1857), 1:89
 Moghulistan
 borders of, 1:88
 Chagatayid khans and, 1:88
 Chagatayids and, 1:88
 civil war between Ariq Boke and Khubilai Khan, 1:88
 Islam, 1:88
 location of, 1:87–88
 Moghul Empire and, 1:89
 overview of, 1:87–89
 religions in, 1:88
 Tarmashirin, overthrow of, 2:49
 territory of, 1:88
 Timur-i Leng, 1:89
 translation of name, 1:87
 Turkestan, 1:87
 Mohi, Battle of (April 1241)
 alternative name for, 2:102
 Batu and Subedei, 2:103–104
 Bela IV (r. 1235–1270), 2:103
 description of, 2:103–104
 effect on Hungary, 2:104
 overview of, 2:102–105
- Money
 booty, 2:142
 coinage, 2:142, 143–144
 conquest monies, 2:142
 customs duties, 2:143
 forms of, 2:142–143
 gold and, 2:144
 mithqal, 2:144
 monetization of the Mongol Empire, 2:144
 Mongke and, 2:143
 overview of, 2:122, 142–144
 photograph of gold coin with names of Chinggis Khan and Samarkand, 2:143
 poll tax, 2:143
 silver and, 2:122, 144
 silver ingots, 2:143
 styles of, 2:143–144
 tamghas, 2:144
 taxes, 2:143
 trade tax, 2:143
- Mongke Khan (1209–1259, r. 1251–1259)
 accomplishments of, 1:166
 Baya’ujin, 1:168
 characteristics of, 1:167
 death of, 1:20, 23, 168
 description of William of Rubruck’s audience with (May 31, 1254), 2:234–235
 Il-Khanate, 1:74
 image of, 1:167
 individuals, 1:30
 invasions of, 1:168
 Kuitani, 1:168
 letter to King Louis IX of France (1250s), 2:233–234
 military career of, 1:167
 name, meaning of, 1:166
 Oghul Qaimish, 1:167
 Oghul Qoymish, 1:168
 Ogodei and, 1:166–67
 ortoq (*ortaq*, *ortagh*) and, 1:239
 overview of, 1:xviii–xix, 166–169

- Qutuqtai Khatun, 1:168
 reforms of, 1:167
 Song Empire (960–1279), 2:196
 sons of, 1:168
 Temuge Otchigin, 1:12
 Toluid Revolution (1250), 1:3, 55, 115, 166, 167
 unification of Mongols, 1:22
 William of Rubruck on, 1:118, 168
 Mongke Koke Tenggeri, 2:2
 Mongke Temur (1266–1279), 1:27, 74
 Mongol archer on horseback, painting of, 2:136
 Mongol composite bow, 2:89, 118, 119
The Mongol Conquests in World History (May), 2:11
 Mongol conversion to Islam
 Abu Said (r. 1317–1335), 2:34
 Ahmad Teguder (r. 1282–1284), 2:33
 Ananda (Prince), 2:33
 Berke Khan (r. 1257–1266) and, 2:32
 Ghazan Khan's (r. 1295–1304), 2:33, 255
 Ghazan Khan's (r. 1295–1304) conversion to Islam, image of, 2:34
 in the Il-Khanate, 2:33
 Islamized Turkic populations and, 2:32
 Mubarak Shah, 2:33
 Muslim communities in China, 2:33
 Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), 2:33
 overview of, 2:32–35
 process of Islamization, 2:32, 34, 255
 Rabban Sawma's account of the meeting of Oljeitu and Mar Yahba Allah (1304), 2:255–256
 Tarmashirin conversion, 2:48, 49
 Tode Mongke (r. 1280–1287), 2:32
 Mongol court culture, 2:11
 Mongol Empire, dissolution of (1216)
 Ariq Boke, 1:22, 23
 Berke, 1:22
 civil war between Ariq Boke and Khubilai, 1:22
 Hulegu, 1:22, 23
 Khubilai, 1:22, 23
 Mongke Khan, death of, 1:22, 23
 overview of, 1:3, 22–24
 Mongol Empire, influence of, 1:xxii
 Mongol Empire, rise of, 1:xv–xvi
 Mongol invasion of Islamic world, Ibn al-Athir on, 2:215–216
 Mongol invasion of Japan, 2:187–188
 Mongol invasions of the Near East, Ibn al-Athir on, 2:216–217
 Mongol khatuns (queens), 1:122–123
 Mongol-Jin War (1211–1234), 2:75, 76
 Mongol-Oirat rivalry, 1:27
 Mstislavich, Mstislav, 2:96, 97
 Mubarak Shah (d. 1266), 1:71, 177, 2:33
 Mubarakh Khoja (d. 1368), 1:70
 Muhammad ibn Tughluq, 2:175
 Muhammad II Khwarazmshah (r. 1200–1220), 2:183
 Muhammad Shaybani, Khan of the Uzbeks (1500–1510), 1:254–255
 Muqali (1170–1223)
 death of, 2:206
 Four Heroes and, 1:90
 overview of, 1:61, 90–92
 tanma, 2:65
 tanmachi or *tammachi*, 1:97–98
 Xi Xia, 2:206
 Muscovy, liberation of, 2:31, 258
 Muscovy military, 2:64
 Muslim Astronomy Bureau (Huihui sitian jian), 2:126
 Muslims
 Abbasid Caliphate, 2:164, 165
 the Assassins, 1:155, 196, 200
 Berke and, 1:xix, 2:32
 Buyid family and, 2:166
 Chagatai and, 1:58
 in China, 1:2, 13–14
 Doquz Khatun and, 1:146
 effects of forced migration of, 1:14
 Guyuk and, 1:152
 Hulegu and, 1:157
 il-khans and, 2:33
 Jerusalem, 2:16
 Kara Kitai rule of, 2:180
 methods of slaughtering animals, 1:211
 Mongol reliance on Muslim, 1:13–14, 2:105
 Nizari Ismailis, 1:155
 ortoq, 1:237
 religious toleration, 1:2
 strife between Shia Muslims and Sunni Muslims, 2:72

- Sufis, 1:54, 244–247
troop migration, 2:209
Turkic Muslims, 1:158
Uzbek Khan and, 1:53
Uzbeks and, 1:254
in the Yuan Empire, 2:3
Yunnan Province and, 2:210
- Mustansir (1226–1242), 2:72, 166
Mustasim ibn Mustansir, 1:223, 2:72, 74
Myriarchies, 1:105
- Naiman
Battle of Chakirmaut (1204), 2:79–80
Battle of the Irtysh River (1209), 1:228
confederations of, 1:227
current status of, 1:228
defeat at the Ulagh Tagh, 2:80
definition of, 1:227
Forest People and, 1:227
Guchulug, 1:228
Inancha Bilge Khan, 1:227
Jin Empire and, 1:228
Kara Khitai, 1:228
Kereit and, 1:216
Ket Buqa, 1:228
literacy of, 1:228
Nestorian Christianity, 1:228
as the Nianbage or Nianbaen, 1:227
overview of, 1:194, 196, 227–229
Tatar-Tong'a, 1:228
Tayang Khan (d. 1204), 1:227
territory of, 1:227
Toghril and, 1:227–228
view of the Mongols, 1:228
Yeke Monggol Ulus, 1:228
- Naptha, 2:88, 106
Nerge maneuver, 2:110
Nestorian Alans, 1:205
Nestorian Christians
Catholicism and, 1:231
in Central Asia, 1:230
in China, 1:2, 14, 230
as the Church of the East, 1:229
Council of Ephesus, 1:229, 230
disappearance of, 1:231
Doquz Khatun (d. 1265), 1:146, 147
first half of the Il-Khanate, 1:231
Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), 1:150
Guyuk and, 1:152
on Jesus, 1:230
Karakorum and, 1:19
the Kereit, 1:215
in medieval Mongolia, 1:35
the Merkit, 1:225
in Mongolia, 1:230
the Naiman, 1:228
Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople
(386–451), 1:229
Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316), 1:174–175
Onggud, 1:237
overview of, 1:196, 229–231
persecution of, 1:230
photograph of the Church of Mary in
Ephesus, 1:229
Rabban Sawma, 1:230
religious toleration, 1:2
Sasanid Empire (224–651) and, 1:230
Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252), 1:185
Turkic tribes and, 1:14
on the Virgin Mary, 1:230
Yahbh-Allah III, 1:230
- Nestorianism, 1:230
Nevsky, Alexander, 2:51, 228
New Sarai, 1:2, 34
Nicaea, 2:99
Nicholas IV (Pope), 2:43
Nikonian Chronicle, 2:228, 258
Niru'un, Durlukin, and social structure,
2:6
Niru'un tribes, 2:5
Nizam al-Mulk, assassination of, 1:200–201
Nizari Ismailis
as the Assassins, 1:155, 196
Hulegu and, 1:75, 155
overview of, 1:201
Shia Islam and, 1:199
Sunni Muslim polemicists on, 1:200
- Nogai (d. 1299)
Golden Horde, 1:74
Il-Khanate and, 1:24
importance of, 1:24
independence of, 1:24
as kingmaker, 1:4
the Noghai Horde, 1:25
overview of, 1:24–26
Tele Buqa and, 1:24

- Tode-Mongke, 1:24
Toqta and, 1:24–25
Noqai kereI (feigned retreat), 2:111
Northern Yuan (1368–1634)
 Arugtai of the Asud, 1:27
 Ayushiridara, 1:26
 Batu-Mongke Dayan Khan, 1:27–28
 Buddhism, second conversion to, 1:28
 collapse of the Northern Yuan dynasty, 1:28
 Dayan divides his empire, 1:26
 Esen Taishi, 1:27
 Mongol-Oirat rivalry, 1:27
 Oirat influence on, 1:27
 overview of, 1:26–29
 succession order of the early Northern Yuan khans, 1:27
 successive Oirat chiefs, 1:27
 Toghan-Temur, 1:26, 27
 Toghoon, 1:27
 Yisuder, 1:27
Nowruz, 1:149
Nur al-Din, 2:171, 172
Nuzhi jun (Jurchen Army), 2:82
- Objects and artifacts
 animal products, 2:122
 calendar, 2:124–127
 clothes, 2:122, 127–130
 coinage, 2:122
 felt, 2:121, 122
 the Five Snouts, 2:121, 130–132
 food, 2:123
 goats, 2:122
 Great Wall of China, 2:124, 132–134
 the horse, 2:121, 135–137
 intellectual achievement, 2:123–124
 Jami'at al-Tawarikh (Compendium of Chronicles), 1:148, 2:123
 kumiss, 2:137–140
 medicine, 2:123, 140–142
 money, 2:122, 142–144
 onggon, 2:122–123, 144–146
 overview essay, 2:121–124
 pasta, 2:123, 146–148
 religion, 2:122
 The Secret History of the Mongols, 2:123–124, 148–150
 sheep, 2:121
- Shengwu qinzheng lu* (The Campaigns of the Holy Warrior), 2:124, 150–152
tenggeri, 2:122, 152–155
Yinshan zhengyao (proper and essential things for the emperor's food and drink) (1330), 2:123, 140, 147, 155–157
yurt (*ger*), 2:121–122, 157–159
- Oboqs*, 1:104
Oghul Qaimish Khatun (d. 1251)
 arrest of, 1:167
 criticism of, 1:169, 226
 defamation of, 1:169
 execution of, 1:169
 failures of, 1:169, 170
 gift-giving practices, 1:170
 Guyuk and, 1:52, 150, 169, 173
 line of succession and, 1:170
 merchant activity and, 1:169–170
 overview of, 1:xviii, 169–171
 sons of, 1:169
 Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252) and, 1:170
 Toluid Revolution (1250), 1:54, 55
 William of Rubruck on, 1:169
 witchcraft and, 1:169, 170
 witchcraft trials, 1:170
- Oghul Qoymish, 1:168
Ogodei Khan (1186–1241)
 accomplishments of, 1:171, 172
 alcoholism and, 1:172
 biography of, 1:121
 commercial policy of, 1:19
 expansion of the Mongol Empire, 1:172
 Golden Horde, 1:73
 ideology of world conquest, 1:171
 image of, 1:172
 as Kha'an or Qa'an, 1:47
 Khwarazmian Empire, conquest of, 1:171–172
 overview of, 1:xvii–xviii, 171–173
 reform of the Mongol Empire, 1:84
 title of, 1:171
 Toregene Khatun, 1:172, 173
 yam (*jam*) system and, 1:110
- Oirat
 Arghun-aqa, 1:232
 assassination of Elbeg Nigulesugchi, 1:232
 Choros Batula Chingsan (d. ca. 1416), 1:232

- current status of, 1:231
 emergence of the Oirat, 1:233
 as “Forest Peoples” (Middle Mongolian
hoi-yin irgen), 1:202, 231, 232
 Jochi, 1:232
 meaning of name, 1:231
 Mongolian Empire and, 1:232
 Oirat script, 1:195
 overview of, 1:194, 231–233
 prestige of, 1:194
 Quduqa Beki, 232
The Secret History of the Mongols, 1:231
 Ugechi Qasaga, 1:232
 uprising of Forest Peoples in 1217–1218,
 1:232
 as Zhunghars, 1:231
See also Forest People
- Old Man of the Mountain, 1:200, 2:252
 Old Man of the Mountain’s fortress, 1:199
- Oljeitu (r. 1304–1316)
 alternative name for, 1:173
 conversion to Islam, 1:122, 2:33–34
 date of birth, 1:173
 full name of, 1:173
 Ghazan and, 1:173
 his patronage of scholars, 1:174, 175
 Il-Khanate and, 1:175
 Islam, conversion to, 1:175
 Mar Yahballah, 1:175
 military expansion and, 1:174
 Nestorian Christians, 1:174–175
 Oljeitu tomb, 1:174
 Oljeitu tomb, photograph of, 1:40
 overview of, 1:173–176
 praise for, 1:173
 Rabban Sawma’s account of the meeting of
 Oljeitu and Mar Yahba Allah (1304),
 2:255–256
 reign of, 1:173–174
 relationship with his subjects, 1:174
 Shiism and, 1:175
 spiritual beliefs of, 1:174
 Uruk Khatun, 1:174
- Ong Khan, 1:94
- Onggirad
 adventures of Hoelun and her children,
 1:234
 alternative name for, 1:233
- Borte, 1:233, 234
 Chabi Khatun, 1:235
 Dei Sechen, 1:234
 importance of, 1:233
 Khubilai Khan and, 1:235
 overview of, 1:194, 233–235
 reorganization of steppe groups, 1:235
 Temujin and, 1:233
 Yesugei, 1:233, 234
- Onggon*
 alternative names for, 2:144
 appearance of, 2:144
 Buriats, 2:145–146
 concept of, 2:145
 cult of, 2:144
 current status of, 2:146
 Darkhad *onggons*, 2:146
 definition of, 2:144
 forms of consecrating *onggons*, 2:145
 John of Plano Carpini on, 2:145
 Mongolian shamanism and, 2:145
onggon of the Lord of Fire, 2:146
 overview of, 2:122–123, 144–146
 Tibetan Buddhism, 2:145
 types of, 2:145
 worship, 2:145–146
- Onggud
 Alaqa-beki, 1:236, 237
 Alaquush Digit Quri, 1:235–236
 alternative name for, 1:235
juyin, 1:214, 236
 Korghuz, 1:237
 meaning of name, 1:235
 the Naiman and, 1:227
 Nestorian Christians, 1:237
 overview of, 1:194, 235–237
 Shatuo and, 1:235
 viticulture, 1:237
- Orda
 challenge to the throne, 1:12
 Guyuk and, 1:151, 153
 Guyuk’s election, 1:11–12
 significance of, 1:69–70, 163
- Ordo* (*ordu*)
amir-ordo, 1:93
 definition of, 1:92
 illustration of, 1:92
 overview of, 1:92–94

- socioeconomic and political relevance
of the *ordos*, 1:92–93
wealth and, 1:93
women and, 1:93–94
- Organization and administration
Alexander Nevsky (1220–1263), 1:64–67
Baiju (d. 1260), 1:42, 67–69
Blue Horde, 1:69–71
Chagatai Khanate, 1:71–73
Golden Horde (Jochid Ulus), 1:73–75
Il-Khanate, 1:75–77
karachi beg, 1:77–79
keshik (bodyguard), 1:79–81
Khurasan, 1:81–83
Mahmud Yalavach (d. ca. 1262),
1:83–85
Mawarannahr, 1:85–87
Moghulistan, 1:87–89
Muqali (1170–1223), 1:90–92
ordo (*ordu*), 1:92–94
overview essay, 1:61–64
Qasar, 1:94–95
tamgha, 1:96–97
tammachi or *tammachi*, 1:97–99
taxation, 1:99–101
transfer of authority, 1:101–103
tribe, 1:103–06
ulus, 1:106–108
writing systems, 1:108–110
yam (*jam*) system, 1:110–112
Yelu Chucai (1189–1243), 1:113–115
Yuan Empire (1265–1368), 1:115–117
Yuan society, 1:117–119
- Orghina Khatun (d. 1261)
Alghu and, 1:177
early life of, 1:176
family connections, 1:176
marriage of, 1:176
Mubarak Shah, 1:177
overview of, 1:123, 176–178
as a political figure in Central Asia,
1:176–177
Qara Hulegu and, 1:176
as regent for Mubarak Shah, 1:71
reign of, 1:177
Yesu-Mongke, execution of, 1:176–177
- Orkhon River Valley, photograph of, 1:17
- Ortoq* (*ortaq*, *ortagh*)
as a commercial partnership, 1:238
contract, 1:238
definition of, 1:237, 238
Khubilai and *ortoqs*, 1:239
literal meaning of, 1:237
Mongke Khan on, 1:239
Mongol government debt and, 1:238
Mongol support of, 1:239
ortoq merchants, 1:239
ortoq relationship, 1:238
overview of, 1:237–240
silver tax in northern China, 1:239
status of *ortoq*, 1:238
usury (*yang-gao-li*), 1:238–239
Uyghurs and, 1:238
- Ortoq* merchants, 1:239
- Ossetians, 1:198–199
- Osterna, Poppo von, 2:101
- Otrar Massacre (1218)
account of, 2:219–220
Ala' al-Din Muhammad II (d. 1220), 2:35, 37
basis of, 2:36
Caliph al-Nasir (r. 1180–1225), 2:166
Chinggis Khan, 2:35, 36
destruction of the Khwarazmian Empire,
2:35
Inalchuq (d. 1219), 2:35–36
Inalchuq, killing of, 2:36
irony in, 2:36
the Khwarazmians, 1:171, 2:35, 183
location of, 1:142, 2:35
Mawarannahr, acquisition of, 1:86, 2:183
overview of, 2:35–37
precipitating events, 2:35–36
response to the massacre of Mongol
merchants, 2:36
siege of Otrar, 2:36
- Paiza*
circular bronze *paizas*, 1:31
description of, 1:29
distribution of, 1:29–30
as the *gerege* in Mongolian, 1:29
Ghazan Khan on, 1:31
illustration of, 1:30
inscription on, 1:29
Jin tablets, 1:29
Khubilai Khan on, 1:31

- military rank and, 1:30
 Mongke and, 1:30
 Mongol Khans on, 1:30
 overview of, 1:29–31
 purpose of, 1:29
 recipients of, 1:29
 use of, 1:29
yam stations and, 1:29
- Paladins, 2:109
- Pan-Turkic identity, 1:255
- Paper money, 2:243
- Paris, Matthew, 2:232
- Parthian shot, 2:111
- Pasta
 definition of, 2:146
 dumplings, 2:147
 durum wheat, 2:146–147
 hanging noodles, 2:147
 hard wheat, 2:147
mantou, 2:148
manty, 2:148
 in the Middle East, 2:147, 148
 overview of, 2:123, 146–148
 pasta imitations, 2:147
 Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324), 2:147, 148
 the term “pasta,” 2:147
Yinshan zhengyao (proper and essential things for the emperor’s food and drink) (1330), 2:147
- The Path and Its Fruits*, 1:241
- Peace of Qatwan (1267)
 Baraq, 2:37–39
 division of Mawannahr, 1:86
 outcome of, 1:181
 overview of, 2:3, 37–39
 parties involved with, 1:72
- Pelliot, Paul, 2:152
- Peng Daya, 2:153
- Persian literary history, 1:77
- Phagspa Lama, 1:109, 241–242
- Phags-pa script
 after the end of the Yuan dynasty, 1:241
 compared with the Uyghur script, 1:109
 as a decorative form, 2:129–130
 overview of, 1:109–110
 Phags-pa documents, 1:109
 significance of, 2:12–13
- Philip of Antioch, 2:173
- Phyagna Dorje, 1:241
- Pneumonic plague, 2:9
- Poland, 2:18–19, 100, 102
- Polo, Marco (ca. 1254–1324)
 on the Assassins, 1:199, 200, 2:252–253
 book controversy, 1:179–180
 on China’s countryside (1298), 2:241–242
 on Chinese ships (ca. 1300), 2:249–250
 on the city of Daidu (ca. 1300), 2:247–248
 date and place of birth, 1:178
 depiction of his travels, 1:179
 early life of, 1:178
 on the fall of Baghdad (1258), 2:235–236
 family of Marco Polo (1254–1324), 1:207
 father of, 1:178
Il Milione, 1:179
 on Japan, 2:188
 Khubilai Khan and, 1:20, 178
 on Khubilai Khan hunting (ca. 1300), 2:248–249
 on Khubilai Khan hunting park at Shangdu (ca. 1300), 2:251–252
 on Khubilai Khan’s palace (1298), 2:242–243
 as a linguist, 1:178
 on Mongol customs (ca. 1324), 2:256
 on Mongol shamanism (ca. 1300), 2:250–251
 on Mongol warriors in the 13th century (ca. 1300), 2:245–247
 on Nayan’s rebellion against Khubilai Khan (1287), 2:239
 on *onggon*, 2:145
 overview of, 1:178–180
 painting shows Marco Polo sailing from Venice, 1:208
 on paper money in China (ca. 1300), 2:243–245
 pasta, 2:147, 148
 as a prisoner of war, 1:179
 Rusticiano and, 1:179
 sailing from Venice in 1271 (painting), 1:208
 Semuren preference and, 1:9
 on the siege of Xiangyang (1273), 2:237–238
Travels of Marco Polo, 1:166, 178, 179
 on the women of Khubilai Khan (1298), 2:240–241
- Prophet Muhammad (d. 632), 2:164

- Province system of Mongol China, 1:84
 Pulad, 1:25
- Qadan, 2:19
- Qaidu (1230–1301)
 Abaqa and, 1:180–181
 Alghu of the Chagatai Khanate and, 1:86
 alliance with Berke, 1:180
 Ariq Boke, support or, 1:180
 Baraq and, 1:181
 Bayan and, 1:182
 conquests of, 1:181
 death of, 1:182
 Il-Khanate and, 1:181
 influence of, 1:181
 as khan, 1:181
 Khubilai and, 1:181, 182
 overview of, 1:180–183
 Peace of Qatwan (1267), 2:37–39
 Qara Qada, battle at, 1:183
 Qutulun, 1:182
 Qutulun, daughter of, 1:182
 Temur Oljeitu and, 1:182–183
- Qalan*, 1:100
- Qanglis, 2:91, 184
- Qara Hulegu (d. 1252), 1:71, 139, 153, 176
- Qarakhanid, 2:180
- Qara-Nogai (r. 1361–1363), 1:70
- Qarluqs of Almaliq, 2:161
- Qasar
 Begter murder, 1:94
 Chinggis Khan and, 1:94–95
 descendants of, 1:95
 family of, 1:94
 full name of, 1:94
 murder of Bekhter, 1:154
 Ong Khan, 1:94
 overview of, 1:94–95
 relationship with Chinggis Khan, 2:52
 reputation of, 1:94
 Teb Tenggeri, 2:52, 53
 Temujin and, 1:94
 Yisungge, 1:95
- Qata Kurin, 2:47
- Qataqin, 2:6
- Qazwini, Hamd Allah Mustawfi, 1:39
- Qilij Arslan I, 2:197–198
- Qin dynasty (221–207 BCE), 2:133
- Qing dynasty (1644–1911), 2:176
- Qipchaq, 2:37
- Qizil Arslan Atsiz Khwarazmshah (r. 1127–1156), 2:182
- Qorchi, 1:203
- Qorchi's prophecy and problem, 1:203
- Qori Tumed, 1:203
- Qubchir*, 1:100
- Quduqa Beki, 1:162, 202, 203, 232
- Qulan Khatun, 1:226–227
- Quriltai*
 1234 *quriltai*, 1:32–33
altan uruq and, 1:31
 attendees of, 1:32
 controversial function of, 1:32
 decline of, 1:33
 definition of, 1:31
 elective function of, 1:31
 functions of, 1:31, 32
mochalga and, 1:31
 overview of, 1:3, 31–33
 places for, 1:31
- Quriltai* of 1206
 awards made at, 2:40
 Chinggis Khan, 1:141, 2:1
 confirming Temujin as Chinggis Khan, 2:39, 41
 Ibaqa, as a gift, 2:40
 impact of, 2:41
 importance of, 2:39
 Jurchedei and, 2:40
keshig (bodyguard), 2:40
 organization of the army, 2:40
 overview of, 2:39–41
 title of khan, 2:40
yasa (law code) of Chinggis Khan, 2:41
- Quriltai* of 1234, 2:18
- Qurjaqus, 1:216
- Qutb-ud-Din Aybak, 2:174
- Qutu, 2:90
- Qutulun, daughter of Qaidu, 1:182
- Qutuqtai Khatun, 1:168
- Qutuz (r. 1260)
 Battle of Ayn Jalut, 1:223–224, 2:70
 Baybars and, 1:132, 224
- Rabban Sawma, 1:230, 2:41
- Rabban Sawma, mission of (1286–1288)

- account of the election of Yahba Allah as
Catholicus of the Eastern Church (1281),
 2:237–238
- account of the meeting of Oljeitu and Mar
 Yahba Allah (1304), 2:255–256
- as Bar Sawma, 2:41
- in France, 2:43
- in Italy, 2:42, 43
- itinerary of, 2:42–43
- Jerusalem, 2:43
- King Philip IV (1285–1314), 2:43
- in London, 2:43
- Mar Denha, 2:42
- Mar Yaballaha, 2:42
- Markos, 2:41
- Nicholas IV (Pope), 2:43
- overview of, 2:41–44
- on Paris, 2:43
- purpose of, 2:41
- on relics, 2:42
- results of, 2:43
- Thomas of Anfossi, 2:42
- Rabi' al-Rashidi (Rashid's Quarter), 1:43
- Rachewiltz, Igor de, 2:156
- Ralph of Dom-front, 2:170
- Rashid al-Din (1247–1318)
- on the Battle of Chakirmaut, 2:81
- against Buyuruq Khan, 2:80
- execution of, 1:126
- on Ghazan, 1:148
- medical encyclopedia, translation of,
 2:12
- Raymond III, 2:173
- Raymond of Antioch, 2:173
- Raymond of Poitiers, 2:170, 171
- Raymond-Rupen, 2:173
- Raziyya, Sultana, 2:175
- Red Turban movement, 1:50, 256
- Red Turban name, 2:44
- Red Turban Revolt (1340s–1368)
- Black Plague and, 2:3
- Chinese resentment of the Mongols, 2:44
- leadership of, 2:44
- overview of, 2:44–46
- at Shangdu, 2:45
- Shangdu, 1:39
- Toghon Temur, 1:50, 2:44, 45
- White Lotus Buddhists and, 1:256, 2:44
- Yuan dynasty, 2:44
- Zhu Yuanzhang, 2:45
- Reformation, 2:51
- Religion, 2:122
- Religion and Guyuk, 1:152
- Religious groups, overview of, 1:195–196
- See also specific groups*
- Religious toleration, 1:2, 2:234
- Renaissance, 2:51
- Reynald of Châtillon, 2:171, 172
- Riasanovksy, Nicholas, 2:50–51
- Rihla* (Book of Travels), 1:158
- Riwan of Aleppo, 2:169
- Robert of Clari, 2:218
- Rockets, 2:88
- Roger of Antioch, 2:169–170
- Romanovich, Mstislav, 2:97
- Rukn al-Din Sulayman Shah II, 2:199
- Rulers of
- Chagatai Khanate, 2:260–261
- Golden Horde, 2:260
- Il-Khanate, 2:259–260
- Yeke Monggol Ulus (Mongol Empire),
 2:259
- Yuan Empire, 2:259
- See also specific rulers*
- Rusticiano, 1:179
- Sa'adat Giray Khan, 1:78
- Sadr al-Din Ahmad Khalidi, 1:16
- Sahib Giray, 1:78–79
- Sakya Buddhists
- current status of, 1:240
- founder of, 1:240
- Hevajra Tantra*, 1:240–241
- image of, 1:240
- key text of, 1:240
- Konchog Gyalpo (1034–1102), 1:240
- Koten, 1:241
- Mongols' first contact with, 1:241
- origin of, 1:240
- overview of, 1:240–242
- The Path and Its Fruits*, 1:241
- Phagspa Lama, 1:241–242
- Phags-pa script, 1:241
- Phyagna Dorje, 1:241
- preeminence of, 1:242
- Sakya Pandita (1182–1251), 1:241

- Square Script, 1:241
 supplementary and teaching text for, 1:241
 Virupa, 1:241
- Saladin (1138–1193), 2:172, 191
- Samarkand
 account of under Timur-I Leng (ca. 1403–1406), 2:257–258
 Alexander the Great and, 2:193
 art and culture, 2:193
 Chinggis Khan and, 2:193
 date founded, 2:193
 economy of, 2:193
 enrichment of, 2:193–194
 Gur-e Amir mausoleum, 2:194
 Hellenistic influences in, 2:193
 location of, 2:193
 as Maracanda, 2:193
 mosque of Bibi-Khanom, 2:194
 overview of, 2:193–195
 photograph of, 2:194
 Rigistan Square, 2:193
 ruin of, 2:193
 the Shah-i-Zinde, 2:194
 significance of, 2:193
 Silk Road trade, 2:193
 Timur and, 2:193–194
 Ulugh Beg and, 2:195
 Uzbeks and, 2:195
 Zoroastrianism and, 2:193
- Sanjar, Sultan, 2:180
- Saqsi Buqa (r. 1312–1320), 1:70
- Sarai
 Batu and, 1:2
 business life, 1:34
 connection with Cairo, 1:34
 demise of, 1:35
 description of, 1:34
 Ibn Battuta on, 1:34
 location of, 1:33, 34
 New Sarai, 1:2, 34
 overview of, 1:2, 33–35
 religions in, 1:34
 size of, 1:33
 structures of, 1:33
- Sari al-Saqati, 1:245
- Sariq Khan, 1:215, 216
- Sartaq (r. 1256–1257), 1:66, 130
- Sasanid Empire (224–651), 1:230
- Sayyid dynasty (1414–1451), 2:176
- Scythians (ca. 1200 BCE–300 CE), 2:184
- Second Turkic Empire (682–731), 2:185
- The Secret History of the Mongols*
 adventures of Hoelun and her children, 1:234
alginchi (scouts), 1:98
 author of, 2:149
 bodyguards, 1:6
 on Chinggis Khan, 2:149
 Cleaves, Francis W., 2:150
 dates of, 2:149
 de Rachewiltz, Igor, 2:150
 as epic literature, 2:149
 focus of activities of, 2:149
 importance of, 2:148–149
juyin, 1:238
 Mahmud, 1:84
 Ming dynasty of China and, 2:149–150
 Ogodei, 1:121, 2:149
 Oirat, 1:231
 Onggirad Dei Sechen, 1:233
ordo (*ordu*), 1:93
 overview of, 2:123–124, 148–150
 redaction of, 2:149
 significance of, 2:149
 social organization, 1:103
 Tatars, 1:250
 title, origin of, 2:149
 translation of, 2:150
yam system, 1:110
 Year of the Mouse, 2:149
- Selim the Grim (1465–1520), 1:224
- Seljuk Sultan Sanjar (r. 1118–1153), 2:182, 183
- Seljuk Sultanate of Rum, 2:97, 98, 99
- Seljuk Turks of Rum, 2:163, 166
- Semuren
 categories in, 1:243
 Chinese scholar-official class and, 1:243–244
 “Clans and Peoples,” 1:242
 meaning of, 1:242
 overview of, 1:197, 242–244
 Tao Zongyi, 1:242
 use of the term *semu*, 1:242
- Senggum, 2:205
- Septicemic, 2:9

- Seventh Crusade, 1:131
- Shadibeg (r. 1400–1407), 1:25
- Shah-i-Zinde, the, 2:194
- Shamanism
- the *chidkur* and children, 1:36–37
 - decline of, 1:37
 - Etuken, 1:35
 - the Kipchaks and, 1:221
 - Koke Mongke Tenggeri (Blue Eternal Sky), 1:35
 - lost souls, retrieval of, 1:36, 37
 - Marco Polo's Description of Mongol Shamanism (ca. 1300), 2:250–251
 - Mongolian shamanism, 1:35
 - overview of, 1:35–37
 - roles of the shamans, 1:36
 - shamans, specialists, 1:37
 - souls and, 1:36
 - spirit world, 1:35
 - spirits, hierarchy of, 1:36
 - the *tailaghan*, 1:36
 - worldview of Mongolian shamanism, 1:35
- Shamans, 2:52
- Shang dynasty (ca. 1766–1122 BCE), 2:133
- Shangdu
- alternative names for, 1:37
 - architecture of, 1:38
 - importance of, 1:38, 39
 - Khubilai Khan's "stately pleasure dome," 1:38, 2:251
 - layout of, 1:38
 - location of, 1:38
 - name change, 1:38
 - overview of, 1:37–39
 - population of, 1:38
- Sharia, 1:59
- Shatuo, 1:235
- Shayban, 1:163
- Sheep, 2:121
- Sheng* (province), 1:7
- Shengwu qinzheng lu* (The Campaigns of the Holy Warrior)
- Atwood, Christopher P., 2:152
 - Chinese translation of, 2:151–152
 - Chinggis Khan and, 2:150–151
 - compared to *The Secret History of the Mongols*, 2:151
 - definition of, 2:150
 - edited text of, 2:152
 - Hambis, Louis, 2:152
 - Jia Jinyan, 2:152
 - mistakes in, 2:152
 - overview of, 2:124, 150–152
 - Pelliot, Paul, 2:152
 - scholarly work on, 2:152
 - sources of, 2:151
 - Tao Zongyi and, 2:152
 - translations of, 2:150–151
 - Wang Guowei, 2:152
- Shera, 1:170
- Shigi-Qutuqtu (ca. 1180–1262), 1:58, 84
- Shiremun
- challenger to Mongke, 2:46
 - Guyuk's election and, 1:11
 - political support for, 1:173
 - seizing of the throne, 2:3
- Shiremun's Coup (1250)
- description of, 2:46–47
 - execution of Shiremun, 2:47
 - investigation of, 2:47
 - Keshik, 2:46–47
 - Menggeser, 2:47
 - noyad* executions, 2:47
 - overview of, 2:46–48
 - Qata Kurin, 2:47
 - secret army, 2:46
- Shirin, 1:168
- Shis*, 1:9
- Shi'uchi* (chisel tactic), 2:111
- Siege warfare
- captives and, 2:105, 106
 - counterfortress, 2:105
 - description of, 2:105–106
 - disassembled siege weapons, 2:106
 - flood, 2:107
 - ilal* (wall), 2:105
 - illustration of the fall of Baghdad, 2:106
 - Mongols use of, 2:61
 - naptha, 2:106
 - overview of, 2:105–107
 - Russian campaign and, 2:107
 - sappers, 2:106
 - siege engines, 2:106
 - use of conscripts, 2:105, 107
 - use of local levies, 2:105–106, 107
 - See also specific events*

- Silver, 2:122, 144
- Sinan (d. 1192), 1:200
- Song Empire (960–1279)
- accomplishments of, 2:196–197
 - fundamental national policy of, 2:195
 - Jia Sidao, 2:196
 - Jin Empire and, 2:94, 176–177
 - Jurchen and, 1:212–213, 2:196
 - Kaifeng, 2:196
 - Kaixi War (1205–1208), 2:196
 - Khitan Liao dynasty (907–1125), 2:195
 - Khubilai Khan, 2:196
 - military weakness, 2:195
 - Mongke Khan, 2:164, 196
 - Mongol-Song alliance, 2:196
 - Northern Song, 2:195–196
 - Ogodei and war with, 2:163
 - overview of, 2:163, 195–197
 - Song army, destruction of, 2:196
 - Song navy, defeat of, 2:196
 - Southern Song period (1127–1279), 2:176, 196
 - Tangut Xia dynasty (1038–1237), 2:195
- Sorqan Shira, 1:48, 143, 145
- Sorqoqtani-Beki (d. 1252)
- alternative name for, 1:183
 - change in the line of succession, 1:184
 - characteristics of, 1:184, 185
 - as an exemplar for proper behavior, 1:184
 - father of, 1:183
 - image of, 1:184
 - influence of, 1:184
 - legacy of, 1:185
 - marriage of, 1:183
 - Oghul Qaimish, plot against, 1:167, 170, 185
 - overview of, 1:xviii, 183–186
 - political acumen of, 1:184
 - reputation of, 1:123, 185
 - sons of, 1:183–184
 - status as a Nestorian Christian, 1:185
- Southern Song dynasty (1125–1279), 2:176
- Square Script, 1:241
- Su Ting, 2:153
- Subedei (1176–1248)
- death of, 2:109
 - dorben noqas* (four hounds), 2:108
 - hounds, steeds, and Paladins, 2:109
 - invasion of Eastern Europe, 2:109
 - invasion of Hungary, 2:100
 - invasion of western Turkistan, 2:108
 - Irtys River battle, 2:108
 - Jin, conquering of, 2:26
 - Kaifeng siege, 2:94–95
 - Kalka River battle, 2:109
 - Merkit surrender, 2:108
 - Mohi battle, 2:103–104
 - overview of, 2:107–110
 - significance of, 2:109
 - taking of Kiev, 2:109
 - as an Uriyangqai Mongol, 2:107–108
- Sufis
- abstinence, 1:244, 245
 - Abu Yazid al-Bistami, 1:246
 - asceticism, 1:245
 - classical Sufism, 1:245
 - definition of, 1:244
 - Dhu al-Nun al-Misri, 1:245
 - doctrine of dissolution, 1:246
 - drunken school of, 1:246
 - importance of, 1:247
 - Islam and, 1:246–247
 - Jalal al-Din, 1:247, 2:225
 - masters, 1:245–246
 - Mawlawiyah *tariqa*, 1:246
 - Muslims and, 1:54, 244–247
 - mysticism, 1:244
 - overview of, 1:244–247
 - persecution of, 1:244
 - as a phenomenon, 1:247
 - poetry, 1:248
 - popularity of, 1:246
 - Sari al-Saqati, 1:245
 - spiritual appointment, 1:244
 - Sufi man pictured in a landscape, 1:245
 - Sufi movement, 1:244–245
 - tariqa* movement, 1:246
 - whirling dervishes, 1:246
- Sulaiman Shah, 2:73
- Sulayman I ibn Qutlumush, 2:197
- Sultanate of Rum
- Anatolian rivals, 2:198
 - Baba Isaq (1240/1241), 2:199
 - Battle of Myriocephalum, 2:198
 - Byzantine-Seljuk relations, 2:198–199
 - capitals of, 2:197
 - decline of, 2:199

- Kay-Khusraw I, 2:199
 Kay-Khusraw II, 2:199
 Kay-Qubadh I (1220–1237), 2:199
 mixed marriages, 2:199
 name of, 2:197
 Nicaean-Seljuk alliance, 2:199
 overview of, 2:197–200
 photograph of the mausoleum of Qilij Arslan II, Alaeddin Camii Mosque, 2:198
 Qilij Arslan I, 2:197–198
 Rukn al-Din Sulayman Shah II, 2:199
 rulers of, 2:197
Saljuq-nama of Ibn Bibi, 2:199
 Seljuk-Byzantine relations, 2:198
 Sulayman I ibn Qutlumush, 2:197
- Sultaniyya
 Amiranshah and, 1:41
 architecture of, 1:40
 Arghun Khan and, 1:39
 decline of, 1:41
 description of, 1:40–41
 expansion of, 1:41
 location of the ruins of, 1:39
 naming of, 1:40
 Oljeitu and, 1:39
 overview of, 1:39–41
 roads and, 1:41
 significance of, 1:41
 site of, 1:39
 tomb of Oljeitu, photograph of, 1:40
- Syrian defeat of the Mongols, 2:71, 72, 164
- Tabriz
 Arghun Aqa and, 1:42
 Baiju and, 1:42
 Chormaqan, 1:42
 commerce reputation of, 1:43
 decline of, 1:43
 Hulegu, 1:42
 location of, 1:42
 overview of, 1:3, 42–44
 Rabi' al-Rashidi (Rashid's Quarter), 1:43
 religions and, 1:42–43
 significance of, 1:43
 Toqtamysh, conquest of, 1:191
 Venetians in, 1:43
 water shortages, 1:42
- Tachar Noyan, 2:75
- Tactics
 archery, 2:110, 211
 Fabian tactics, 2:111
 field army, 2:110–111
 flanking maneuvers, 2:111
 hunting, 2:110
 kill zones, 2:111
nerge maneuver, 2:110–111
noqai kerel (feigned retreat), 2:111
 overview of, 2:110–111
 Parthian shot, 2:111
 scheduled attacks, 2:110
shi'uchi (chisel tactic), 2:111
- Taiping, 1:27
- Tama*, 2:65
- Tamerlane. *See* Timur-i Leng (1336–1405)
- Tamgha*
 of Chinggis Khan, 1:96
 commercial tax and, 1:96
 functions of, 1:96
 ink color, 1:96–97
 languages used, 1:97
 as a livestock brand, 1:96
 overview of, 1:96–97
 as a seal, 1:96, 97
 symbol of aristocracy, 1:96
 as a tax, 1:97
- Tancred of Lecce, 2:168, 169
- Tang dynasty (618–907), 1:247
- Tangut
 Chaghan, 1:248
 culture, 1:248
 as Danxiang, 1:247
 definition of, 1:247
 as *juyin* (auxiliaries), 1:248
 Mi-nyag, 1:247
 origin of, 1:247
 overview of, 1:195, 247–249
 Tibetan Buddhism and, 1:248
 writing system, 1:248
 Xi Xia and, 1:248
- Tangut Xia dynasty (1038–1237), 2:195
- Tanksuq-nama-yi Il-Khani dar funun-i 'ulum-i khitay* (Treasure Book of the Il-Khans on the Sciences and Learning of China), 2:12, 140–141
- Tanma*
 the *alginchin*, 2:112

- in China, 2:112
- definition of, 2:112
- Eastern Mongols, 2:113
- importance of, 2:113
- Inner Mongolia and, 2:112, 113
- Jalayir Mongol Muqali (d. 1223), 2:112
- Khitan troops, 2:113
- local forces associated with, 2:112
- the Onggud, 2:112
- origin of word, 2:112
- original intent in establishment of, 2:112
- original *tanma* force, 2:112
- overview of, 2:112–113
- positioning of, 2:82
- significance of, 1:9
- tanmachi* and, 2:62
- Tanmachi* or *tammachi*
 - alginchi* (scouts), 1:98
 - as the basis for any large-scale campaign, 1:97–98
 - Chormaqaq and, 2:62
 - definition of, 1:97
 - descendants of the original *alginchi* or *tanmachi*, 1:99
 - horses and, 1:98–99
 - La flor des estoires de la terre d'Orient* (The Flower of Histories of the Land of the East) and, 2:65–66
 - military and, 2:62
 - overview of, 1:97–99
- Tanmachin*, 2:66
- Tao Zongyi, 1:242, 243
- Taqiyya*, 1:200
- Tarim Basin, Asia, photograph of, 2:203
- Tariqa* movement, 1:246
- Tarmashirin, 1:72, 158
- Tarmashirin, overthrow of (1334)
 - brothers of Tarmashirin, 2:48
 - the Chagatayids, 2:48, 49
 - consequences of, 2:49
 - Mawarannahr, 2:49
 - Moghulistan, 2:49
 - overview of, 2:48–50
 - rule of the Chagatai Khanate, 2:49
 - Tarmashirin, conversion to Islam, 2:48, 49
- Tatar Yoke
 - census taking, 2:50
 - concept of, 2:4
 - Karamzin, N. M., 2:50
 - khanate's interactions with the Rus' principalities, 2:50
 - Nevsky, Alexander, 2:51
 - overview of, 2:50–52
 - the Reformation and, 2:51
 - the Renaissance and, 2:51
 - Riasanovksy, Nicholas, 2:50–51
 - Russian Church chronicles, 2:50
 - scholarly view of, 2:50–51
 - schools of Russian nationalist history and, 2:50
 - as a trope in Russian national history, 2:51
- Tatars
 - Ambaghai, 1:249–250
 - Chinggis Khan's wars against, 1:250
 - confederation, 1:249, 250
 - current status of, 1:250
 - defeat of, 1:250
 - definition of, 1:249
 - feud with the Mongols, 1:249
 - Jin Empire and, 1:249, 250
 - juyin*, 1:214, 249
 - Lithuanian Tatars, 1:192
 - massacre of, 1:104
 - Me'ujin Se'ultu, 1:250
 - overview of, 1:193, 249–251
 - from Tatar to Tartars and steak tatar, 1:251
 - the term “Tatar,” 1:249, 250
 - Yesugei, murder of, 1:250
- Tatar-Tong'a, 1:108, 228
- Taxation
 - agricultural, 1:101
 - forms of regular taxation, 1:100–101
 - initial taxation, 1:99
 - irregular assessments, 1:100
 - Mahmud Yalavach's reforms, 1:100
 - mal* tax, 1:100
 - methods of, 1:100
 - mid-13th century, 1:101
 - Mongke's system of, 1:101
 - necessity of, 1:99
 - overview of, 1:99–101
 - during the reign of Ogodei, 1:100
 - requisition of livestock, 1:100
 - taghar* assessment, 1:100
 - tamgha* tax, 1:101
 - taxes or pasture, 1:114

- tithe, 1:100
touzghou or *tourghou* tax, 1:100–101
 tribute, 1:100
 Yelu Chucai's reforms, 1:100
 Tayang Khan (d. 1204), 1:227, 2:79
 Teb Tenggeri, 1:95, 135, 154, 166
 Teb Tenggeri, death of (1206)
 execution of, 2:52, 53
 importance of shamans, 2:52
 importance to Chinggis Khan, 2:2, 52
 Jochi Qasar and, 2:52
 motivations for, 2:52
 overview of, 2:52–54
 prophecy of, 2:52, 53
 Qasar and Chinggis Khan, 2:52, 2:53
 as a shaman, 2:2, 52
 Soqor and, 2:53
 Temuge Otchigan, 2:53
 Teguder Ahmad (d. 1284), 1:93, 148
 Tele Buqa, 1:24
 Temuge, 1:1
 Temuge Otchigin, 1:12, 2:53
 Temujin (1165–1227)
 Baljuna Covenant (1203), 2:6–8
 as Chinggis Khan, 1:140
 Kereit and, 1:216, 217
 murder of Bekhter, 1:154
 Onggirad Dei Sechen and, 1:233
 overview of, 1:xv
 Temur Khan (r. 1294–1307)
 accession to the throne, 1:44
 Bayan Noyan (1236–1295), 1:46
 Bulukhan, his wife, 1:45
 depiction of, 1:44
 foreign campaigns and, 1:44–45
 Jingim, 1:44
 overview of, 1:44–46
 reconciliation with his kinsmen, 1:45
 return of the Pax Mongolica, 1:45
 Temur Oljeitu, 1:44, 182–183
Tenggeri
 as amoral, 2:153
 association with “God” and “heaven,”
 2:154
 definition of, 2:152
 epithets attributed to, 2:153
 fortune of, 2:153
 importance of, 2:152, 153
 influence of, 2:153
 John of Plano Carpini on, 2:153
 Khubilai Khan and heaven, 2:154
 and the legitimacy of the khan, 2:153
 Mongolian *tenggeri*, 2:154
 overview of, 2:122, 152–155
 relationship between heaven and Earth,
 2:153
 rituals and, 2:153
 shamanism and, 2:154
 translation of, 2:152
 Zhao Gong on, 2:153
 Teutonic Knights
 in the Baltic region, 1:66
 Battle of Leignitz, 2:99, 101
 battle on the ice, 1:67
 in Eastern Europe, 2:17
 Thomas of Anfossi, 2:42
 Thomas of Spalato, 2:20
 Thunder crash bombs, 2:88
 Tibet, 1:242
 Tibetan Buddhism, 1:248, 2:205
 Tibetan medical practitioners, 2:140
 Tibetan Sakya Buddhism, 1:196
 Timur Qutlugh, 1:25
 Timur-i Leng (1336–1405)
 Account of Samarkand Under (ca. 1403–
 1406), 2:257–258
 Bayezid I and, 2:67
 Blue Horde, 1:70
 at Damascus, 1:188
 death of, 1:188
 Delhi, sacking and burning of, 1:187
 disability of, 1:186
 Golden Horde, 1:74
 Golden Horde, conquest of, 1:187
 his success in the Middle East, 1:186–187
 Husain, victory over, 1:186
 image of, 1:187
 invasions of, 1:187–188
 Kipchak steppes, 2:186
 legitimizing his invasions, 1:188
 Mawarannhar, 1:89
 overview of, 1:124, 186–188
 place of birth, 1:186
 remodels Samarkand, 1:188
 rise to power, 2:49
 Samarkand and, 2:193–194

- as Timur the Lame (Tamerlane), 1:186
- title of, 1:47
- Toqtamyshev invasions, 1:187
- Titles
 - amir*, 1:47
 - aqā* or *akha* (elder brother), 1:47
 - ba'atur* or *bahadur*, 1:48
 - beg*, 1:47
 - beki*, 1:48
 - Chinggis Khan, 1:47
 - darqan* (*tarqan*, *tarkhan*, *darkhan*), 1:48
 - functionary titles, 1:46
 - guregen* (*kuregen*), 1:47
 - honorific titles, 1:48
 - il-khan, 1:47
 - Kha'an or Qa'an, 1:47
 - khaghan, 1:46
 - khan, 1:46, 47
 - khatun, 1:47
 - khuda* or *quad*, 1:47
 - mergen*, 1:48
 - military titles, 1:46
 - nokor* (companion), 1:47
 - overview of, 1:46–48
 - padishah* (emperor), 1:47
 - sultan, 1:47
- Tode Mongke (r. 1280–1287)
 - conversion to Islam, 2:32
 - failure as a ruler, 1:24
- Toghon Temur (r. 1333–1370)
 - accession to the throne, 1:48
 - Ayushiridara, 1:50
 - Bayan Noyan and, 1:49
 - coup, 1:49–50
 - death of, 1:26
 - as disposable, 1:49
 - exile of, 1:49
 - overview of, 1:4, 48–50
 - poor governance and, 1:49
 - Red Turban Revolt, 2:44, 45
 - Red Turbans and, 1:50
 - reign of, 1:4
 - Toghto and, 1:50
- Toghoon, 1:27
- Toghrih, 1:216, 217, 227–228
- Toghrih Ong Khan, 1:141
- Tolui Khan (1191–1232)
 - accidental death question, 1:190
 - alcoholism, 1:189
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:189
 - death of, 1:189
 - military abilities of, 1:189
 - military campaigns of, 1:189
 - overview of, 1:189–190
 - sons of, 1:189
 - Sorqoqtani, 1:189, 190
 - title of khan, 1:190
 - wives of, 1:189
- Toluid Revolution (1250)
 - consequences of, 1:3
 - description of, 2:55
 - first/second *quriltai*, 2:54
 - Khoja, 2:54
 - Mongke Khan and, 1:115, 2:54–55
 - Naqu, 2:54, 55
 - Oghul Qaimish and, 1:54, 55
 - overview of, 2:54–56
 - Shiremun and, 2:55
- Toluids, 1:52
- Toqa-Temur, 1:70
- Toqta Khan (r. 1290–1312), 1:24–25, 53
- Toqtamyshev (d. 1406)
 - Battle of Kulikovo Pole, 2:30–31
 - death of, 1:192
 - Edigu and, 1:25
 - in Lithuania, 1:192
 - Lithuanian Tatars, 1:192
 - Mamai defeat, 1:74
 - overview of, 1:191–192
 - Tabriz, conquest of, 1:191
 - Temur-Qutlugh, 1:192
 - Timur and, 1:187, 191–192
 - Timur-i Leng (Tamerlane) and, 1:191
 - unification of the Jochid realm, 1:191
 - Urus Khan and, 1:70
- Toqtoa Beki, 1:226, 2:81
- Toquchar, 1:82
- Toregene Khatun (r. 1241–1246)
 - alternative names and spelling for, 1:51
 - characteristics of, 1:51
 - criticism of, 1:51, 52
 - Fatima and, 1:52
 - Guyuk (r. 1246–1248), 1:150, 152
 - imperial decrees, 1:51
 - independence of, 1:51
 - Naiman and, 1:228

- overview of, 1:xviii, 51–52
- quriltai* election and, 1:51
- as regent of the empire, 1:1, 51, 52
- reputation of, 1:51–52
- Toluids and, 1:52
- the wife of Ogodei, 1:10, 11, 51
- Touzghou* or *tourghou*, 1:100–101
- Traidenis (r. 1270–1282), 2:189
- Transcaucasia, 2:84, 86, 98, 117, 163
- Transcaucasia, conquest of, 2:163
- Transfer of authority
 - Chin-Temur, 1:102
 - Chormaqan Noyan, 1:101–102
 - Dayir Noyan, 1:102
 - difficulty in, 1:103
 - Edgu-Temur, 1:102
 - Korguz, 1:102
 - overview of, 1:101–103
 - the *tanma*, 1:102, 103
- The Travels of Marco Polo*, 1:166, 178
- Treaty of Devol, 2:169
- Trebizond
 - commercial importance, 2:200
 - current status of, 2:200
 - founding of, 2:200
 - in Greek legend, 2:200
 - Il-Khanate and, 2:201
 - isolation of, 2:200
 - location of, 2:200
 - overview of, 2:163, 200–202
 - trade, 2:200–201
 - Trebizond kingdom, 2:163
- Trebuchet
 - Acre siege (1291), 2:116
 - at Aleppo, 2:115
 - assault on Xiangyang, 2:115
 - Byzantine siege (1165), 2:115
 - counterweight trebuchet, 2:114, 115
 - development of, 2:115
 - mangonel, depiction of, 2:114
 - manpower for, 2:115
 - Mongol use of, 2:115
 - overview of, 2:114–116
 - range of, 2:115
 - rate of fire, 2:115
 - torsion-based mangonels, 2:115
 - traction-based weapons, 2:114–115
 - varieties of, 2:114
 - western trebuchet (*manjaniq maghribi*), 2:115
- Tribe
 - basis of social organization, 1:103
 - Bodonchar, 1:104
 - bolok irgen*, 1:104, 105
 - gure'en*, 1:105
 - kinship, 1:104
 - mingan*, 1:105
 - myriarchies*, 1:105
 - oboqs*, 1:104
 - overview of, 1:103–106
 - The Secret History of the Mongols* on, 1:103, 104
 - urughs*, 1:104
 - wars of unification and, 1:104
 - See also *specific groups*
- Tribes, overview of, 1:191–192
- Tsunami strategy
 - definition of, 2:116
 - destruction of the Khwarazmian Empire, 2:117
 - development of, 2:117
 - explanation of, 2:63, 116–117
 - intelligence gathering, 2:116
 - invasion, 2:117
 - key to the success of, 2:117
 - overview of, 2:116–118
 - tanma* units, 2:117–118
 - time schedule, 2:116–117
- Tughluk Temur Khan, 1:87
- Tughluq dynasty, 2:175, 176
- Turk khanate, 1:251
- Turkestan, 1:87
- Ugechi Qasaga, 1:232
- Ugra River, Battle of, 2:258
- Ulaanbaatar, 2:159
- Ulema, 1:246–247
- Ulus*
 - best-known *uluses*, 1:106
 - boundaries of, 1:107
 - Chaghatai's, 1:106
 - contraction of, 1:106
 - definitions of, 1:106
 - disappearance of distinct *uluses*, 1:107
 - expansion of, 1:106
 - four *uluses* of Chinggis Khan's sons, 1:106

- Golden Horde term, 1:106
- Jochi's, 1:106
- khanates and, 1:107
- Ogodei's, 1:106
- overview of, 1:106–108
- prince's *ulus*, 1:107
- reduction of the *ulus* of Ogodei, 1:106
- Tolui's, 1:106
- Umayyad Caliphate (661–750), 2:165
- Urban II (Pope), 2:168
- Uriyangqai Mongol, 2:107
- Urughs*, 1:104
- Uruk Khatun, 1:174
- Urus Khan (1368–1378), 1:70
- Uyghur Chinqai, 2:7
- Uyghur Khanate (744–840), destruction of the, 1:202
- Uyghuristan
 - capital cities of, 2:202
 - Chinggis Khan, special relationship with, 2:204
 - date of submission to the Mongols, 2:202
 - international trade and mercantile activities, 2:202–203
 - as the kingdom of the Uyghur *idiqu* (ruler), 2:202
 - location of, 2:202
 - overview of, 2:161, 202–204
 - production of both sacred and secular literature, 2:203
 - satellite photo of the Tarim Basin, Asia., 2:203
 - winter and summer capitals, 2:202
- Uyghurs
 - alliances of, 1:251–252
 - Chinese Tang state and, 1:252
 - Chinggis Khan and, 1:253, 2:204
 - friction with the Tibetans, 1:252
 - Kara Khitai and, 1:253
 - Karabalghasan, 1:252
 - Manichaeism, 1:252
 - Mongol military campaigns and, 1:253, 2:204
 - overview of, 1:195, 251–253
 - religious pluralism, 2:203
 - reputation of, 1:253, 2:203
 - state of, 1:252, 253
 - as the Toquz Oghuz, 1:251
 - trade, 2:202–203
 - Turk khanate, 1:251
 - as Turks, 1:251
 - Uyghur diaspora, 1:252, 253
 - a Uyghur prince with attendants, image of, 1:252
 - Uyghur script, 1:109, 30, 108, 110, 195
 - Uyghurstan state, 1:252
 - Uzbeks, 2:204
 - voluntary submission to the Mongols, 1:253, 2:204
- Uzbek Khan (1282–1341; r. 1313–1341)
 - Baba Tukles converts the Khan, 1:54
 - Buddhism and, 1:53
 - Christianity and, 1:53
 - conversion to Islam, 1:53, 54, 74
 - impact of his reign, 1:54
 - Muslim Il-Khanate war, 1:53
 - Muslims and, 1:53
 - overview of, 1:53–55
 - political manipulation with Russian princes, 1:53–54
 - Sunni Muslims and, 1:254
 - taxes and, 1:53, 54
 - Toqta Khan and, 1:53
- Uzbekistan, 1:255
- Uzbeks
 - Abulkhair Khan, 1:254
 - definition of, 1:254
 - dialects of, 1:254
 - division of Uzbek territory, 1:255
 - as an ethnic name for all the Turkic, 1:255
 - Girei, 1:254
 - Ismail, 1:255
 - Janibek, 1:254
 - Karakalpakstan, 1:255
 - Muhammad Shaybani, Khan of the Uzbeks (1500–1510), 1:254–255
 - national identity, 1:255
 - overview of, 1:253–255
 - Pan-Turkic identity, 1:255
 - populations of, 1:254
 - Uzbekistan, 1:255
- Vatatzes III, John, 2:99
- Vietnam, 2:188
- Vytenis (r. 1295–1315), 2:189

- Wa Kang, 2:76
 Wallachia, invasion of, 2:19
 Wang Guowei, 2:152
 Wanyan Aguda (1068–1123), 1:212
 War with the Jin Empire, 2:2
 Weapon technology, 2:61, 63–64
 Weaponized gunpowder, 2:87
 Weapons
 arms manufacturing, 2:120
 arrow shafts, 2:119
 arrowheads, 2:119–120
 bowstring, 2:118–119
 composite bow, 2:89, 118
 composite bow, construction of, 2:118
 composite bow, draw of, 2:119
 composite bow, range of, 2:119
 illustration of a horse archer, 2:119
 itinerant blacksmiths, 2:120
 lances and spears, 2:120
 maces and axes, 2:120
 most common among the Mongol warriors, 2:118
 overview of, 2:118–120
 quality of, 2:120
 whistling arrowheads, 2:120
 Western Liao Empire, 2:176
 Whirling dervishes, 1:246
 White Horde, 1:70
 White Lotus Buddhism, 1:196
 White Lotus Buddhists
 Amidha Buddha, 1:256
 as a derogatory term, 1:257
 Huisi (515–576), 1:256
 Huiwen, 1:255
 Maitreya Buddha, 1:256
 Ming dynasty persecution of, 1:257
 overview of, 1:255–258
 patriarchs of, 1:255, 256
 popularity of, 1:256
 Red Turban movement, 1:256
 Red Turbans, 2:44
 temples of, 1:256, 257
 the Three Truths, 1:255–256
 White Lotus secret society, 2:44
 zhiguan meditation, 1:256
 Zhiyi (538–597), 1:256
 Zhu Yuanzhang and, 1:257
 William of Rubruck, journey of (1253–1255)
 ‘Abd Allah and, 2:56
 account of the distinctive Mongol hairstyle (1250s), 2:230–231
 Bartholomew of Cremona, 2:56
 description of audience with Mongke Khan (May 31, 1254), 2:234–235
 description of Mongke’s drinking fountain (1250s), 2:229–230
 description of yurts (1250s), 2:231
 enjoys Kumiss (1250s), 2:228–229
 as a Franciscan, 2:56
 Gosset, 2:56
 itinerary of, 2:56
 on kumiss, 2:138, 139
 Louis IX (King) of France and, 2:4, 56
 Mongke Khan and, 1:18, 2:56
 overview of, 2:56–57
 private goal of, 2:102
 on Qutuqtaï Khatun, 1:68, 169
 religion and, 2:56
 report of, 2:56–57
 return journey, 2:57
 view of the Mongols, 2:57
 Wiraraja (King), 2:92, 93
 Witchcraft trials and executions by drowning, 1:170
 Women in the court
 Chabi (wife of Khubilai Khan), 1:55
 Doquz Khatun (wife of Hulegu), 1:55, 57
 Doquz Khatun with Hulegu, illustration of, 1:56
 finances of, 1:55–56
 military influence of, 1:57
 in the Mongol Army, 1:56
 Oghul Qaimish (1248–1250), 1:55
 Orghina Khatun (r. 1251–1260), 1:55
 overview of, 1:55–57
 religious affiliation of, 1:57
 Sorqoqtani Beki (wife of Tolui), 1:55, 57
 Toregene Khatun (r. 1242–1246), 1:55
 Writing systems
 Chinggis Khan (1162–1227), 1:108
 illustration of, 1:108
 languages, 1:109
 lingua franca of the Mongol Empire, 1:109
 overview of, 1:108–110
 Persian language, 1:109
 Phagspa Lama, 1:109

- Phags-pa script, 1:109–110
 Tatar-Tong'a, 1:108
 Uyghur language, 1:109
 Uyghur script, 1:108, 109
 Wu-ku-sun Chung Tuan, 2:222–223
- Xanadu* (Coleridge), 1:166
- Xi Xia (1038–1227)
 Anquan (r. 1206–1211), 2:206
 Chinggis Khan and, 2:205, 206
 invasions of the Jin, 2:206
 Li Yuanhao, 2:205
 massacre of Zhongxing's population, 2:206
 Muqali (1170–1223), 2:206
 nomads of Mongolia and, 2:205
 overview of, 2:161, 204–206
 rebellion of, 2:206
 role in the history of the Mongol Empire,
 2:204
 Senggum, 2:205
 the Tangut and, 2:205
 Tibetan Buddhism, 2:205
 as a tributary of the Jin Empire, 2:205
- Xiangyang, siege of (1267–1273)
 commanders of, 2:207
 description of, 2:207
 duration of, 2:207
 as an example of Mongol power, 2:208
 at Fancheng, 2:207
 fortifications of, 2:207
 location of, 2:207
 overview of, 2:163, 206–208
 significance of, 2:206–207
 Song reactions to, 2:207–208
 trebuchet, use of the, 2:208
- Xin Jun (New Army), 2:82
- Xingsheng*, 1:7
- Xiongnu Empire (209 BCE–93 CE), 2:61
- Yahbh-Allah III, 1:230
- Yam* (*jam*) postal system
 abuse of, 1:111
 Chinggis Exchange, 2:11
 definition of, 1:110
 fixed post stations, 1:111
 founder of, 1:110
 Ghazan Khan and, 1:111
 in the Il-Khanate, 1:111
 Khubilai Khan and, 1:111
 main postal roads, 1:110
morin jam (horse station), 1:110, 111
narin jam (fine station), 1:111
 overview of, 1:110–112
 post roads, 1:111
 pree-Mongol origins of, 1:112
 significance of, 1:112
- Yanjing, 1:38
- Yasa*
 after the dissolution of the Mongol Empire,
 1:58–59
 alternative names for, 1:58
 Chagatai and, 1:58
 definition of, 1:58
 Khubilai Khan and, 1:58
 legal systems and, 1:58
 Mongke Khan, 1:58
 Muslims and, 1:58, 59
 Ogodei and, 1:58
 overview of, 1:58–59
 sharia and, 1:59
 sources for knowledge of, 1:59
 universal application of, 1:58
- Yeke Monggol Ulus (Mongol Empire)
 Mongol identity, 1:140
 organization of, 1:228
quriltai of 1206, 1:228
 rulers of, 2:259
- Yelu Chucai (1189–1243)
 as *bichigchi*, 1:113
 Buddhism and, 1:113
 conflict with Toregene, 1:114
 description of Mawarannahr (ca. 1220),
 2:224
 family influence, 1:114
 his *Xiyou lu* (Entries on a Journey to the
 West), 1:113
 importance of, 1:113
 Jurchen calendar *Daming li*, revise of, 2:125
 overview of, 1:113–115
 specialty of, 1:113
 spirit tablet, 1:114
 taxation system and, 1:100
 taxes or pasture, 1:114
 translations of, 1:113
 as Urtu Saqal (Long Beard), 1:113
 as a *Zhongshu ling*, 1:7

- Yelu Chucai (1190–1244), 2:140, 224
- Yelu Dashi, 1:219, 2:179–180
- Yesu Mongke, 1:71, 152–153, 177
- Yesugei (d. 1171)
- Borte and, 1:233
 - family of, 1:234
 - Hoelun, abduction of, 1:153
 - Hoelun, marriage to, 1:225
 - Kereit and, 1:216
- Yesugei, death of (ca. 1174/1175)
- abandonment of Hoelun, 2:58–59
 - anda* bond/relationship, 2:59
 - consequences of, 2:58
 - description of, 2:58
 - Hoelun (d. ca. 1210), 1:53, 2:58
 - overview of, 2:58–60
 - protocol of, 1:250
 - The Secret History of the Mongols*, 2:59
- Yinshan zhengyao* (proper and essential things for the emperor's food and drink) (1330)
- avoidance chapters of, 2:155–156
 - the Bi-chi, 2:140
 - chapter 1 of, 2:155
 - chapter 2 of, 2:156
 - chapter 3 of, 2:156
 - compiler of, 2:156
 - current status of, 2:156–157
 - definition of, 2:155
 - Hu Sihui, 2:156
 - Islamic influence in, 2:156
 - medical information, 2:140, 155
 - overview of, 2:123, 155–157
 - on pasta, 2:147
 - present form of, 2:155
- Yisuder, 1:27
- Yisu-Mongke, 1:139
- Yisungge, 1:95
- Yongle, 1:27
- Ystoria Mongalorum (History of the Mongols)*, 2:27
- Yuan dynasty, 1:xx, 2:44, 151
- Yuan Empire (1265–1368)
- Chinese tradition and, 1:116
 - as a compromise, 1:116
 - conquest of China, 1:115
 - Da Yuan (Khanate China), 1:116
 - da zongzheng fu*, 1:116
 - daruqachis* (imperial representatives), 1:116
 - foreigners and, 1:116
 - Khubilai Khan, 1:115–116
 - Mongke Khan (1251–1259), 1:115
 - overview of, 1:115–117
 - parallelism of double officers and appointments, 1:116
 - political factionalism, 1:3–4
 - rulers of, 2:259
- Yuan society
- China under the Mongols, 1:118
 - Khubilai Khan, 1:117, 118
 - northern China, conquest of, 1:117
 - overview of, 1:117–119
 - reunited China, 1:117, 118
 - Yuan term, 1:118
- Yunnan
- Confucianism, 2:209
 - current status of, 2:210
 - defeat of the Dali state, 2:209
 - importance of, 2:210
 - incorporation into China, 2:209
 - independent states of, 2:208–209
 - legacy of the Mongol construction of Yunnan, 2:210
 - location of, 2:208
 - Muslim communities, 2:209
 - overview of, 2:163, 208–210
 - Prince Khubilai and, 2:209
 - Sayyid Ajall's administration, 2:209
 - uniqueness of, 2:209
- Yurt (*ger*)
- construction of, 2:157
 - current status of, 2:157
 - disassembly of, 2:158
 - door of, 2:157
 - etiquette concerning, 2:159
 - felt, 2:157
 - during hot weather, 2:157
 - interior order of, 2:159
 - interiors of, 2:158
 - outline of downtown Ulaanbaatar and, 2:159
 - overview of, 2:121–122, 157–159
 - photograph of, 2:158
 - size and owner status, 2:158, 159
 - white felt, 2:157, 158

- during winter, 2:157
- of wives, 2:159
- Zhangzong (r. 1189–1208), 2:177
- Zhao Gong, 2:153
- Zhao Hong on Mongol horses, 2:136
- Zhiguan* meditation, 1:256
- Zhiyi (538–597), 1:256
- Zhongdu
 - Chinggis Khan's attacks on, 2:211
 - the chronicler Juzjani's account of the capture of Zhongdu (1214), 2:218–219
 - depiction of Samuqa besieging Zhongdu, 2:212
 - destruction of, 2:94
 - Jin Empire and, 2:211, 212
 - location of, 2:210
 - overview of, 2:162, 210–213
 - population of, 2:210
 - siege of, 2:211–212
 - significance of the fall of, 2:212
 - surrender to the Mongols, 2:212
- Zhongshu ling*, 1:7
- Zhu Yuanzhang, 1:257, 2:45